Useful Beauty

Early American Decorative Arts

From St. Louis Collections



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The colonial period is widely revered as the Golden Age of American artisans. Eighteenth-century craftsmen produced furniture, silver, and other decorative arts whose visual richness is so appealing and aesthetic so expressive that the styles now known as William and Mary, Queen Anne, and Chippendale are touchstones in American decorative arts.

This selection of furniture, silver, and needlework from St. Louis collections illustrates the way new ideas and attitudes about public life and social refinement found expression in the decorative arts. The everyday lives of Americans - from the highly ritualized drinking of tea to the furnishings prepared for the "best chamber" of a new household - are beautifully reflected in the stunning array of case furniture, chairs, tables, and silver salvers, tankards, candlesticks and other forms described in this book.

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FROM ST. LOUIS COLLECTIONS

David H. Conradsen

with a Foreword by
Patricia E. Kane

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Foreword

St. Louis can claim one of the most active communities off the East Coast of collectors of the decorative arts and design of British North America. Evidence of this is seen in the American colonial acquisitions of furniture, silver, and needlework that St. Louisians have in this exhibition and its accompanying publication as well as in the ongoing local activities of the Decorative Arts Society and the Acanthus Society.

People collect for various reasons. To furnish in a manner that they find pleasing is an incentive for many. Others are less interested in furnishing than in pursuing their attraction to objects in a particular medium and in building specialized collections. Collectors of decorative arts from the colonial period typically share a reverence for handcraftsmanship wed to artistry. Once the eye has become attuned to surroundings in which this pre-industrial quality predominates, such as the strong articulation of architectural moldings and the glint of robust brass hardware, interiors with latter day imitations of colonial forms appear pallid by comparison. As collections grow, the better objects drive out the weaker ones.

With furniture made by colonial craftsmen it is often the richly grained and figured wood and the subtle color and patina it has gained with time that capture the attention of collectors. Many of the woods used by colonial craftsmen are now rare and, if available, are difficult to obtain. Joiners who made oak furniture in the seventeenth century prepared the wood by riving it, that is, splitting it along its radial dimension. The characteristic blond rays of oak are very evident on boards fabricated in this way, and collectors prize the variegated appearance of riven oak. The black walnut seen in furniture of the first half of the eighteenth century dramatizes the skills of cabinetmakers who used thin slices of veneer to create complex patterns on the tops and facades of casepieces, such as the dressing table (Cat. 22). By the mid-eighteenth century the colonists imported mahogany from Central America and the Caribbean Islands—sources for this wood that have long been exhausted. Such mahogany is cherished for its unsurpassed fiery color and dramatic grain. These attributes exalt objects made from it, such as the Philadelphia sideboard table (Cat. 21).

Carving is a major aspect of handcraft that holds allure for collectors. Carving ultimately defines the best examples of furniture in the period immediately before the American Revolution when the vogue of the rococo style emphasized surface decoration. The skills of the most expert colonial carvers rivaled those then practiced in London. Such carvers worked in Philadelphia where they brought their artistry to the carved crest rail, front seat rail, and legs on the side chair (Cat. 8). Carved decoration produced in rural areas, while less skillful and complex, occasionally possesses an attractive vigor seen in the sprightly rococo leafage on the high chest from the Connecticut River Valley (Cat. 26).

Handcrafted silver shares attributes with the furniture. Fabricating silver by hand embues the surfaces of vessels and salvers with subtle modulations lacking in machine-manufactured wares, such as those produced by a drop press or a spinning lathe. Like furniture, the surface of silver acquires a patina over time seductive to the knowledgeable collector. Because silver made by craftsmen in British North America was less highly planished and burnished than silver being made by English silversmiths, it tends to develop a soft gray-blue color as the surface layers of the objects are worn down over time to the underlying firescale, such as the surface on the tankard by Paul Revere, Jr. (Cat. 39). This color gives colonial silver a special warmth and immediacy uncommon in twentieth-century production. Deftly engraved monograms and coats-of-arms add graphic interest to colonial silver and often make the difference between a mundane object and a thing of beauty. A few examples of colonial silver have emblematic engraving. An exceptional example of this rare occurrence is the salver by the New York silversmith Myer Myers (Cat. 50). While engraving skills are gradually being lost to the past, they are increasingly whetting the appetite of silver collectors.

Collecting to furnish is an exercise in taste and imagination. Putting objects together in subtle and creative ways so that they enhance one another in ensembles that become more than a sum of the parts is an immeasurably tougher task for the collector than mere collecting. The exercise of collecting and furnishing in combination is not readily accomplished. Indeed, it may be easier to collect to furnish a dozen rooms at once than to collect to furnish a single room. Among the early collectors of British North American decorative arts it was Henry Sleeper, Henry Francis du Pont, and Nina and Bert Little who ceaselessly practiced the art of combining objects into artistic ensembles. Through refinements over time the form, color, and materials of objects were juxtaposed to play off one another and create counterpoints underscoring the special character of each object. We can learn from their achievements through their legacies: Sleeper's "Beauport" at Gloucester, du Pont's "Winterthur," and the Littles's "Coggeswell's Grant," in Essex, Massachusetts. These collectors went beyond the simple furnishing discipline aimed at achieving an overall harmony of style, materials, color, texture, and pattern.

Sometimes the furnishings are collected before the room, and sometimes the room is acquired before the furnishings. Two collectors whose objects are included in the exhibition have striven to improve the architectural details of their twentieth-century domiciles so that they are more sympathetic and enhancing settings for their eighteenth-century furniture. In both cases Laurent J. Torno, Jr., a St. Louis architect with a great understanding of eighteenth-century design, tools, and processes, has designed these settings by specifying additional architectural moldings in accord with eighteenth-century practice and by incorporating eighteenth-century paneling and flooring.

The individuals whose collections are represented in this exhibition and publication approached the process of forming their collections in ways as different as the personalities themselves. Passion, acquisitiveness, and zest for the chase and the deal are familiar attributes of the collector. But being a worthy collector—a collector who advances our understanding and appreciation of his or her collection—involves dedication, study, and is ultimately about education. Such collectors progress from simply having the answers in regard to what they collect to the greater challenge of generating the questions.

Today many more opportunities to acquire knowledge about early American decorative arts exist than when du Pont and the Littles began their collections in the 1920s and 1930s. A few special interest groups served these early collectors, such as the English Ceramics Circle (est. 1927), The Rushlight Club (est. 1932), the Wedgwood Club (est. 1933), and the Pewter Collectors' Club of America (est. 1934). Following World War II the number of study opportunities multiplied, starting with the annual Williamsburg Forum in 1949. Since the early 1970s and the wider interest in America's colonial past spawned by the nation's 1976 bicentennial celebration, these educational opportunities have escalated. From their inception in 1973, the Friends of American Arts Workshops at Yale have stressed education through hands-on study, a teaching discipline also offered to collectors by other institutions such as Winterthur, Historic Deerfield, Christie's, and Sotheby's.

The educational aspect of collecting has led a number of collectors to become scholars in their own right. Nina Fletcher Little, who researched and published on the subjects she collected, contributed greatly to our understanding of early American decoration and design. She exemplifies the collector/scholar. Individuals allied with Yale who have followed this path are Dr. Benjamin Hewitt, whose interest in collecting Federal furniture led to his analysis of Federal card tables, *The Work of Many Hands* (1982). Alice K. Kugelman and Thomas P. Kugelman, long-time participants in Yale's American Arts Workshops, teamed with conservator Robert Lionetti and published articles based on their intensive study of Connecticut furniture (*Maine Antiques Digest* [March 1993] 36-38A; [January 1994] 12-14D; [October 1995] 1-4C). Among the lenders to this exhibition, E. J. Nusrala has published his findings on his John Goddard desk (Cat. 29) (*Antiques* [May 1984]:1148-9) and his Jonathan Shoemaker chest-on-chest (Cat. 28) (*Antiques* [May 1985]: 1172-3).

Collectors frequently have mentors in the process of forming their collections. Through my role at Yale, I have had the pleasure of knowing and enjoying the friendship of several of the collectors whose objects are represented in this exhibition and publication. I have been grateful for the opportunity to serve sometimes as mentor, sometimes as an informed sounding board with whom to talk it all over. Collectors also look to a dealer for a mentor. The role of a good dealer is to guide, challenge, and drive the interests of a collector. The best dealers are those with a passion for the material they sell and the ability to proselytize about it. The best of them also do not compete with their clients by collecting what they sell. Some dealers have been great and influential teachers. Three, Joseph K. Kindig III, Bernard Levy, and Albert Sack, were born to their calling, and, like their fathers, they are legendary in the field.

Important auctions of Americana have continued since the early part of the twentieth century and offer an essential tool for monitoring commercial value as well as a venue for making acquisitions. The major auction houses based in New York City have been the American Art Association, Anderson Galleries and Parke-Bernet. The English firms of Sotheby's and Christie's now predominate in New York City with smaller houses located there and throughout the country. Serious collectors habitually examine sales catalogues, seek out the catalogues of important sales from the distant past, and go to the pre-sale exhibitions. Auction previews provide extraordinary opportunities for examining large numbers of objects in a relatively

informal way without the constraints encountered in museums or with dealers. The pre-sale exhibitions enable collectors to train their eyes to issues of condition and quality. Buying at auction can be exhilarating given the mental exercises of determining that an object is worthy of being acquired, assessing the bidding competition, and estimating its hammer price. Decision-making is telescoped into a short period of time when buying at auction. While some collectors excel and operate best in this arena, others engage in extensive study and contemplation of acquisitions and are better off working with dealers.

In making acquisitions some collectors follow their gut instincts and some can better afford mistakes, but for most collectors committing significant funds to the purchase of an object is a complicated step-by-step decision. The first priority is the determination of overall quality. This assessment typically follows the approach used by Albert Sack in *Fine Points of Furniture: Early American* (1950), the bible of early American furniture collectors for more than five decades. While providing a guide to ranking forms by quality standards, it teaches the difference between what is good, better, and best. In assessing a potential acquisition images of related examples are gathered in order to make visual comparisons. It is for this reason that most collectors form and maintain extensive libraries of books, periodicals, and auction catalogues. For instance, when the coffeepot by the silversmith William Hollingshead (Cat. 42) was under consideration for purchase, the collectors gathered photographic images of some twenty-five comparable Philadelphia coffeepots. Such images allow comparative studies of form (the shape of the body, the placement of the spout, the height of the foot and lid), and of decoration (the scale of the gadrooned edges and the quality and placement of the engraving). Photographs have their limitations. Indeed, they can be misleading depending on the lens used, the angle of the camera to the object, and the lighting. In addition, photographs offer little evidence on which to judge the surface of an object, its color, the degree of wear, and overall scale. To assess these aspects, comparable examples must be examined firsthand, either in museums, the marketplace, or in other private collections.

Assembling images of related examples also provides information about rarity. Rarity is a crucial element of connoisseurship. It has a direct bearing on determining the probable commercial value of an object and may also guide attitude and response to condition. Restoration of some pediment ornament on the Philadelphia desk and bookcase (Cat. 31) was deemed acceptable given the rarity of the form. Likewise, loss of the feet was acceptable to the collectors of the Newport bureau table (Cat. 27), given their limited opportunities of owning such a rare form intact.

A history of ownership—what is called provenance—augments the quality, importance, and commercial value of an object. Because Philadelphia silver of the colonial period is rare, the tankard by the Philadelphia silversmith Elias Boudinot (Cat. 36) had special appeal. However, the identification of the original owners as George and Anna (Clarke) Okill [or O'Kill] through the evidence of the monogram added to the desirability of the tankard as an acquisition and encouraged the collectors to challenge competitors for it at auction. Provenance adds cultural value to an object because it provides additional evidence with which scholars can interpret social context. The traditional history of ownership associated with the chairs and tea table attributed to Eliphalet Chapin greatly enhanced their

desirability. In the case of the table (Cat. 19), the condition and surface color of the top were below the standards that the owners had set for themselves, but after deliberation those standards were deemed worth compromising because of the exceptional provenance of the table. As David Conradsen writes in this publication about the table, it comes from one of the most complete known sets of American colonial marriage furniture. The importance of having this table and two chairs as an ensemble of three out of the nineteen surviving pieces outweighed the condition and heavy refinishing of the top of the table.

In addition to early histories of ownership, recent provenance impacts the value of an object. Objects have additional cache if they can be linked to a famous person or collection or were acquired from a dealer associated with high quality goods. Such is the case with the Philadelphia chair (Cat. 7). It was in the sale of the collection owned by the preeminent dealer Howard Reifsynder, which was the single most important auction of Americana of the late 1920s and 1930s; it was included in the Girl Scouts' loan exhibition of 1929, an exhibition which established quality standards for American furniture; and it was later included as a "best" example in Albert Sack's *Fine Points*.

The joys of collecting involve the bits of serendipity and luck that occasionally mark all collectors' paths. One of the greatest delights in collecting American furniture is to discover that a piece one has acquired bears the signature of its maker. One such discovery happened with the collections exhibited here. When I examined the Philadelphia double chest (Cat. 28) after the owners acquired it, we discovered that it bore the name of Jonathan Shoemaker, a Philadelphia cabinetmaker. Evidence like that enhances the importance of a piece as a document in the history of American furniture and adds to the pride of ownership.

Collecting is also about sharing. Collecting groups and programs for collectors exist so that they may share their experiences, their trophies, and their knowledge with others. A willingness to share with a wider audience is at the heart of this current exhibition and its publication. They provide the public with access to the artistic achievements in the colonies of British North America. The ultimate act of sharing on the part of a collector is the gift or bequeathal of an object or collection to an institution that is empowered to hold it in public trust for educational enrichment and aesthetic pleasure.

Patricia E. Kane
Curator of American Decorative Arts
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut

Useful Beauty: Form and Function in Eighteenth-Century American Decorative Arts

For many people interested in American decorative arts, the colonial period, and the eighteenth century, in particular, is revered as the Golden Age of American art and artisanry. American furniture and silver of the eighteenth century represent interpretations of two major European stylistic impulses, the baroque and the rococo; in furniture those movements are reflected in the styles popularly known as William and Mary, Queen Anne, and Chippendale. Chairs, tables, and case furniture made in response to these styles blend architectural form and sinuous line embellished with an ornamental vocabulary of shells, scrolls, and foliate decoration. Colonial furniture is usually made from either native-grown woods such as black walnut, cherry, or maple, or imported tropical hardwoods like mahogany, which has been shaped, carved, and finished to a smooth sheen. Similarly, colonial silver embodies bold but simplified geometric forms, polished to mirrored luster, and trimmed with cast foliage and other ornaments, classical moldings, and select passages of chased or engraved designs.The decorative arts of the eighteenth century are stylistically expressive and aesthetically charged objects, and perceptions of these qualities by contemporary viewers are neither accidental nor coincidental. In their form and function, the decorative arts of eighteenth-century America reflected new attitudes and ideas about style and lifestyle which set this period apart. By about 1700, furniture, silver, and other decorative arts became more responsive to style and stylistic change, and became more numerous and specialized in their intended functions than ever before.

For this catalogue of eighteenth-century American decorative arts and the exhibition it accompanies, the title's terms of "usefulness" and "beauty" paraphrase ideas of function and form which are integral components of the decorative arts. Function in the decorative arts can be a broad inquiry, since objects have symbolic functions beyond simple utility as gifts, heirlooms, and mementos. Silver tankards (Cat. 39), teapots, salvers, and other forms are frequently mentioned in wills, suggesting the importance of silver in the transfer of wealth, authority, and lineage to subsequent generations. The rococo-style salver (Cat. 50) made for Theodorus Van Wyck in the late 1760s was the only specific silver ware bequeathed to Van Wyck's son in his will; such a direct transfer indicates its prominence to Van Wyck as a memento for his descendants. Because silver is a stable and liquid asset, its value as a transferable commodity is readily apparent. Bequests and gifts of objects without inherent worth show that objects could also confer value in terms which are not so easily measured. The embroidered coat of arms made by Elizabeth Flower (Cat. 52) is one of a group of textiles wrought by the three Flower sisters in Philadelphia in the 1760s. The backboard of the frame is signed by Elizabeth [Flower] and later by her daughter. The descent of this coat of arms in subsequent generations is not recorded on the frame, although other objects made by the Flowers are still owned by their descendants, confirming their continued value as heirlooms and direct links to a cherished past.

In the eighteenth century, however, many new kinds of objects were designed with increasingly public and socialized customs in mind. Tea drinking is perhaps the best known social ritual of eighteenth-century American life, but polite consumption of coffee and other beverages, dining, gaming, and other public entertainments were also transformed into expressions of a cultivated lifestyle when accompanied by beautiful and useful objects.[1] Throughout the century, the growing assemblage of furniture and furnishings were accompanied by new modes of comportment and etiquette that were part of a larger trend in social refinement. The everyday lives of Americans were increasingly ordered by conventions of behavior as well as by objects—such as formal chairs and tables—which reinforced performances of public rituals. These activities range from work to the leisure activities of dining, drinking, and card playing, to semi-private activities that included grooming and dressing. A remarkable group of objects in this publication illustrates the range of stylish furniture deemed necessary for an affluent young couple "going to housekeeping" in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. In December 1775, when Anna Grant married the Reverend John Marsh of Wethersfield, Connecticut, her father, the wealthy East Windsor merchant Ebenezer Grant, placed an order with the skilled local cabinetmaker Eliphalet Chapin. The thirty-one items in the order included three sets of six Chippendale-style chairs of different patterns (Cat. 10, 11; Fig. 4), and a tea table (Cat.19) which would set a standard of quality for the young couple's fashionable parlor and dining room. Such stylish and ornamental furnishings reveal fundamentally different attitudes toward objects in eighteenth-century America.

Throughout the eighteenth century in the urban style centers—Boston and Newport in New England; New York and Philadelphia in the Mid-Atlantic region; and Charleston, and other cities in the South—the principal source of stylistic information was England. London style, in particular, predominated. By about 1700, for example, several artisanal trades such as goldsmithing, chairmaking and upholstery, and looking glass manufacture were already well-organized industries geared toward the mass-production of goods destined for markets in British North America. Consequently, before the publication of printed sources became commonplace, objects imported to the colonies or emigrant craftsmen either trained in or conversant with London fashions represented the primary means of conveying new stylistic information to both craftsmen and consumers in America. A looking glass (Cat. 34) which bears the label of Stephen Whiting, a Boston looking glass maker and seller, may be of American manufacture. If so, its sucess as an commodity in eighteenth-century Boston would have been measured by Whiting's ability to match or approximate the quality, style and appearance, and price of looking glasses produced by his English competitors. Great quantities of English silver were imported in the eighteenth century by American silversmiths, merchants, and consumers, and parallels are evident in the salvers, waiters, and other silver forms which could be readily copied because they could be precisely modeled and cast as duplicate forms. The four candlesticks (Cat. 51) by the New York silversmith Samuel Tingley are so similar to known London examples that Tingley probably used an imported original to create the molds used to cast them.

[1] Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities,* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 52.

Although keeping up with the latest fashion was important, new designs or styles were seldom so closely copied by American artisans. Craftsmen, through their skill and access to materials and designs, and patrons through their needs and

tastes, influenced the forms and fashion of furniture, silver, and other decorative arts objects produced and consumed in the colonies. Regionally based studies of American furniture and its makers have shown how local conditions affected the conventions of appropriate form and style. Furniture by craftsmen of eighteenth-century Newport, (Cat. 25, 27, 29, 33) demonstrates the distinctive regional vocabulary of shell-carving that dominated the design and production in Rhode Island for three generations or more. Innovative forms or novel designs were continually presented and adapted to suit local tastes and preferences; more often than not, new fashions were subject to partial acceptance while some elements of a new style were rejected. In Philadelphia, for instance, the rococo-style designs of Thomas Chippendale and others were widely adapted and assimilated into the vocabulary of furniture design and ornament (Cat. 8, 9, 31). In contrast, Chippendale's stylistic influence was virtually unknown in rural New England where, instead, principles of baroque design determined in the 1730s continued to be relevant in the design of furniture which was characterized by verticality, symmetry, and architectural form (Cat. 26). [2]

In discussing the decorative arts of colonial America, it is useful to consider recent scholarship in the consumer revolution, a phenomenon of accelerated production and consumption of domestic objects that swept Europe and the European colonies beginning in the late seventeenth century and continued through the eighteenth century. After about 1690, the quantity and quality of material possessions changed dramatically. As the number of objects increased, so did their importance in the lives of ordinary and extraordinary people alike. Scholars argue that in a world captivated by a proliferation of domestic objects, the role of material possessions increasingly became a mirror reflecting their owners' social status, sophistication, and wealth.[3] Eighteenth-century sensibilities toward material possessions were probably surprisingly similar to modern perceptions that "goods make the man." Although scholars of consumerism usually consider emulation and envy as the primary motives for increasing demand for consumer goods, the art historian Margaretta Lovell has proposed adding the aesthetic response to the historical experience of objects. Although the impact of the aesthetic response is difficult to measure, the perception of beautiful forms was a powerful element in the eighteenth-century experience of objects and would figure in the process that a contemporary observer would use to calculate the owner's wealth or social status.[4] Colonial Americans seldom recorded their thoughts about the objects which made up their material world, but the objects speak for themselves. The visual richness of form, materials, textures, and surfaces of decorative arts objects show that aesthetic pleasure was an integral element in the making and consumption of most useful and beautiful objects in the eighteenth century.

There are many ways to approach eighteenth-century objects. In her Foreword, Patricia E. Kane articulates some of the inspirations and motivations for objects of this kind especially for collectors. As a curator, scholar, and connoisseur, who has been associated with the department of American decorative arts at the Yale University Art Gallery for more than twenty years, Kane is particularly well prepared to describe the rewards of collecting American decorative arts for individuals sensitive to the formal qualities of objects made through "hand-craftsmanship wed to artistry." For the collectors whose works are included in this exhibition and catalogue, aesthetic and formal quality are primary; secondary motivations

[2] Philip Zea, "Diversity and Regionalism in Rural New England Furniture," in Luke Beckerdite and William N. Hosley, eds., *American Furniture,* (Milwaukee: The Chipstone Foundation, 1995), 96-7.

[3] My ideas in this essay are particularly influenced by Cary Carson, "The Consumer Revolution in Colonial British America: Why Demand?" in Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert, eds., *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century,* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia for the United States Capitol Historical Society, 1993), 483-697.

[4] Margaretta M. Lovell, "'Such Furniture as Will Be Most Profitable:' the Business of Cabinetmaking in Eighteenth-Century Newport," in *Winterthur Portfolio* 26 (1991), 30-38.

also include considerations of history or provenance, documentation of important craftsmen, patrons, or collectors. It is my hope that broad considerations of form and function offer visitors to the exhibition and readers of this catalogue a compelling exercise in the enjoyment of eighteenth-century American decorative arts.

I thank each of the collectors whose work is represented in this catalogue for sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm, as well as their generous good will and support of this project, especially Elissa and Paul Cahn, Mary and Jim Dierberg, Jane and Matthew Newman, Mimi and Edward J. Nusrala, Lesley and George Schoedinger. They represent a group of St. Louis collectors whose friendships and interests in these objects have grown through collecting. Inspiration for the exhibition comes from them and their collecting achievements. I would also like to thank Kitty and Jim Drescher and Peggy and Guy McClellan for their loans of works which were inherited rather than collected. I especially wish to thank those whose generous contributions made possible the publication of this catalogue: Elissa and Paul Cahn, Lesley and George Schoedinger, Mimi and Edward J. Nusrala, Jane and Matthew Newman, the Acanthus Society, and Sotheby's.

This project began several years ago with inquiries into the range of American decorative arts owned in St. Louis. Over the last few years I have met many individuals in St. Louis who made their collections large or small available to me. Happily, the most difficult task in this project has been to choose a comparatively small number of objects for inclusion, and I wish to acknowledge the St. Louis collectors whose works, in the end, were not included in the exhibition.

I am grateful to Patricia E. Kane, Curator of American Decorative Arts at the Yale University Art Gallery, who graciously agreed to recollect her experiences in collecting American decorative arts for this catalogue. Over the years, private collectors acquire memorable experiences and friends as they acquire objects and expertise. Patricia Kane has forged friendships with many St. Louis collectors whose works are represented here.

The splendid photography in the catalogue is the work of John Paul Torno and David Ulmer, two photographers whose vision, patience, and sense of perfection ensured the superb visual quality of this publication. I would also like to acknowledge Hans Lorenz of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation who photographed two objects while they were at Williamsburg for conservation.

Numerous colleagues have generously shared ideas, provided information, or made objects in their collections accessible. I would like to thank: John Barfield; David Barquist, Yale University Art Gallery; Wendy Cooper, Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum; Nancy Goyne Evans; Leroy Graves, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; William N. Hosley, The Antiquarian and Landmarks Society, Ronald L. Hurst, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; Patricia E. Kane, Yale University Art Gallery; Alice and Thomas P. Kugelman; Natalie Larson, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; Johanna McBrien; Caitlin McQuade, Missouri Historical Society; Alan Miller; Robert F. Trent; and Philip Zea, Historic Deerfield, Inc.

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I would also like to thank my parents, Jane K. and Harvey C. Conradsen, who as volunteer research assistants showed tireless enthusiasm for reading account books, probate inventories, vital records, and family histories in search of elusive names and dates. Their help in many ways is greatly appreciated. Finally, I owe a great debt of gratitude to my companion, Bonnie Effros, for her thoughtful comments and constant encouragement, her patience and good humor throughout this project.

David H. Conradsen

This publication
is dedicated to the memory of
William M. Gordon
D.H.C.

1

Chair, 1735-60

Boston, Massachusetts
Black walnut, maple
40 3/8 x 22 x 21 1/2 *inches*



IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, Boston's chairmakers and upholsterers produced great quantities of joined chairs made of walnut and maple for sale locally and for export. The account books kept by the upholsterer and merchant Samuel Grant (1705–1784), whose career spans the second quarter of the eighteenth century, document Boston's chairmaking and upholstery trades and have allowed furniture scholars to formulate a precise chronology of changes in fashion from the styles today called William and Mary to Queen Anne and Georgian. Joined chairs like this example, made in Boston by the mid 1730s, retain the high backs of early eighteenth-century leather chairs and the sturdy undercarriages of block-and-columnar-turned side and medial stretchers, arranged in the H-pattern employed by London caned-chairmakers by the mid 1720s.[1]

Grant's accounts indicate that between 1728 and 1734 Boston's chairmakers introduced several novel fashions in seat furniture; by about 1735 the most expensive chairs he sold incorporated all the elements associated with the fully developed Queen Anne style: round-shaped "compass" seat rails and "cushion," or loose, seat frames; "horsebone round feet," or turned, cabriole legs with pad feet; vasiform banisters, or splats; and "crooked," or contoured, posts. Chairs such as this example include the stylish curvilinear elements of Grant's new fashion chairs and incorporate an additional ogee or S-scroll in the design of the "sweep," or incurving, posts, as well as a deeply modeled shell atop a C-scroll on the crest rail.

1 Brock Jobe and Myrna Kaye, *New England Furniture, The Colonial Era,* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984), cat. no. 90. The Grant accounts, first published by Brock Jobe, are analyzed most recently in Nancy E. Richards and Nancy Goyne Evans, *New England Furniture at Winterthur, Queen Anne and Chippendale Periods,* (Winterthur, Del.: The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1997), 12-15.

2

Chair, 1735-45

Boston, Massachusetts
Black walnut, maple, pine
41 1/8 x 20 1/2 x 20 1/2 *inches*



CHAIRS AND OTHER FURNITURE made in Britain and in the American colonies from the mid 1720s, which have been termed Queen Anne and Georgian style, represent a synthesis of two stylistic threads: the Chinese and Continental baroque.[2] This chair is a dynamic fusion of Chinese designs with an English chairmaking tradition. The round-section stiles, yoke-shaped crest rail, curvilinear or "crooked" back and solid banister, and cabriole legs are all elements found in Chinese furniture, and either imported objects or chairs depicted on imported ceramics may have served as models for this chair's English prototypes. Similarly, imported Chinese porcelain is believed to have inspired the profile of the vasiform banister, which became one of the principal decorative elements of chairs in this style. In fact, English chairs from the 1680s through the 1740s frequently combine a variety of exotic Asian motifs and materials such as the painted and gilt ornament called "japanning," an imitation of lacquer work, and rattan, a reed imported from Asia and widely used for woven chair seats. This chair's design also uses one of the principal motifs of the baroque style, the S-scroll or "ogee" curve, which is used for the incurved or "sweep" posts, the contour of the side seat rails, the unusually complex pattern ornamenting the front seat rail, and the cabriole legs which are lined with carved S- and C-scrolls. The chair's carved claw feet originated in China, but interpreted here as "eagle's feet," they also reference the classical vocabulary of the baroque style.

This chair and several other related examples were formerly attributed to chairmakers working in New York and Newport, however recent research on the trade in Boston chairs points to a probable origin in that city. Although no eighteenth-century history accompanies this chair, it was originally part of a set of six or more chairs and is closely related to at least two other sets which probably originated in the same Boston shop about 1740. One chair, which has a flat stretcher base, ogee-shaped front seat rail, and turned feet, has a long history of ownership in New Hampshire; a nearly identical chair at Winterthur, which is said to have descended from Charles Morgan, a New York City merchant, differs only in the addition of upper volutes on the carved scrolls on the legs.[3] Few round stile chairs were made in New England and fewer still have this chair's attenuated elegance and sinuous form from crest rail to claw foot.

2 Brock W. Jobe, "The Late Baroque in Colonial America: The Queen Anne Style," in Gerald W. R. Ward, ed., *American Furniture with Related Decorative Arts, 1660-1830*, (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1991), 105. In the 1690s, "Chinoiserie" motifs also figure in the architectural and ornamental designs of the influential baroque designer Daniel Marot.

3 The present chair and its mate were formerly in a private collection in Philadelphia; Decorative Arts Photograph Collection (DAPC), accession 71.245, Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum. The Morgan chair at Winterthur, number XII in a set, is cat. 15 in Richards and Evans, *New England Furniture*, 28-9.Two additional side chairs possibly from the Winterthur set, sold at Sotheby's, New York, January 18, 1998, lot 1744. The flat-stretcher chair with a double ogee-shaped front rail is in Richard H. Randall, Jr., *American Furniture in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1965), cat. 133.

3
Chair, 1740-60

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Black walnut, yellow-poplar
42 3/4 x 20 1/8 x 20 1/2 inches



PHILADELPHIA CHAIRS IN THE LATE BAROQUE or Queen Anne style with curvilinear backs and cabriole or "crook't" legs are first mentioned in that city in 1739, but, as in Boston, they probably were made by about 1730. Philadelphia chairmakers produced a variety of different joined chair designs during the second quarter of the eighteenth century, and this chair's high curvilinear back, boldly shaped vasiform banister, compass seat, and cabriole legs ending in carved trifid feet are all features popular in the 1740s. Chairs of this type with open banisters continued to be made until the 1750s and possibly later. An account book of the turner and chairmaker Solomon Fussell, recorded between 1738 and 1751, shows that in the late 1740s, joined chairs with leather seats cost about £1 each when made of walnut and £2 when made of mahogany.[4] This walnut chair's extra joinery and carved shells and volutes would probably have increased its total cost.

Although imported "New England fashion" chairs influenced at least one of the popular chair forms of the 1730s and 1740s, other impulses are also evident in the joined chairs made by Philadelphia's chairmakers. The outward appearance of Cat. 3 is primarily an expression of baroque design in a British tradition, however, the joinery may also demonstrate the assimilation of elements of a Germanic chairmaking tradition. The rails on this and most other types of Philadelphia Queen Anne-style joined chairs are oriented with the broader dimensions laid flat. These horizontal boards are either lapped or tenoned and the joint secured with pins and a wedged round tenon of the turned cabriole leg. This technique of joining seat rails and legs is widely, though not exclusively, employed by Philadelphia chairmakers and is also one of several used by chairmakers in the Rhineland and Westphalia in Germany, and elsewhere in northern Europe. The technique could well have been transmitted to England, Ireland, or Philadelphia by emigrating continental craftsmen.[5] Although the precise cultural origin of the characteristic horizontal seat rail and wedged tenon construction of Philadelphia chairs may be difficult to discern, the effect of this construction method is clear. The broad seat rails provide greater strength than their visible dimensions indicate, permitting these chairs to be built without a stretcher undercarriage and enhancing the dynamic composition of sinuous linear forms and voids, punctuated with carved shells and volutes. This chair was part of a set of at least six chairs and may be from the same set as two identical chairs in The Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Henry Ford Museum. It descended in the Rittenhouse family of Philadelphia and, according to family tradition, was owned by the clock- and instrument-maker David Rittenhouse (1732-1796).[6]

4 Benno M. Forman, "Delaware Valley 'Crookt Foot' and Slat-Back Chairs: the Fussell-Savery Connection," in *Winterthur Portfolio* 15: no. 1 (1980), 41-64.

5 Desiree Caldwell, "Germanic Influence on Philadelphia Early Georgian Seating Furniture," (unpublished master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1985), 29-32, 70-72; and Philip D. Zimmerman, "Philadelphia Queen Anne Chairs at Wright's Ferry Mansion," in *The Magazine Antiques,* CXLIX, no. 5 (1996), 736-45.

6 The chairs are illustrated respectively in Morrison H. Heckscher, *American Furniture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Late Colonial Period: The Queen Anne and Chippendale Styles,* Volume II, (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1985), cat. 40, and Helen Comstock, *American Furniture: Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Century Styles,* (New York: Viking, 1962), fig.167.

4
Chair, 1740-60 (one of a pair)

Boston, Massachusetts
Black walnut, maple
38 1/2 x 22 x 21 1/2 inches



THIS CHAIR IS ONE OF A PAIR, which are numbers I and VI from a set of at least six; a nearly identical set which originally numbered twelve chairs is also known. Chairs of this design probably are similar to a set of chairs listed in the probate inventory of the prosperous Boston upholsterer Theodore Wheelwright, taken following his death in 1750. Wheelwright's best bedchamber contained seven chairs with "Eagles foot and shell on the knee @ 80 [shillings each]." Other chairs made of mahogany and black walnut in Wheelwright's house and upholsterer's shop were further distinguished by fashionable elements also employed in this chair, such as compass seats—so-called because their horseshoe shapes were plotted with swings of a compass—and "false" or loose seats, now called slip seats. The upholstery material is not specified, although Wheelwright probably upholstered his chamber chairs *en suite* with his green harateen bed curtains. This chair's maple loose seat frame shows evidence of edge nailing, a technique which may indicate leather as the first seat cover. Black and red leather were stylish and less expensive options to imported woolen upholstery fabrics such as harateen. Other closely related chairs with histories of ownership in Boston, Salem, and Dedham in northeastern Massachusetts, Worcester in central Massachusetts, and Deerfield in the western part of the colony attest to the popularity and widespread consumption of Boston-made chairs of this design in the middle of the century.[7]

7 Andrew Passeri and Robert F. Trent, "The Wheelwright and Maerklein Inventories and the History of the Upholstery Trade in America, 1750-1900," in Brock W. Jobe, ed., *Old-Time New England,* 72 (1987), 316-8, 333-6.

5
Chair, 1735-60

Boston, Massachusetts
Cedrela, maple
38 1/2 x 21 1/2 x 21 3/4 *inches*



PROBABLY ONE OF A SET OF EIGHT OR MORE CHAIRS, this example relates to a group of chairs with histories of ownership in prominent families in eighteenth-century Boston and New York. No history accompanies this chair, although it appears to be from the same shop as a chair with a history in the Yates family of Schenectady and another owned by John Aspinwall (1707-1774), a wealthy mariner and privateer of New York and Flushing. These chairs and related examples with long histories of ownership in New York have in the past been attributed to chairmakers in that city. More recent analysis of both stylistic and documentary evidence suggests a Boston origin for much of the seating furniture formerly attributed to artisans in New York and Rhode Island. As the largest city in the American colonies until about 1740, Boston served as the principal entrepôt of imported English goods, which were then distributed throughout the colonies by the city's extensive mercantile network. Although the Boston origin of this chair and others has only recently been rediscovered, it was a point not lost on consumers elsewhere in the Atlantic colonies, who clearly understood the pretense of the "latest English fashion" implied by imported "Boston chairs."[8]

This chair is in the style called Georgian, a second phase of the baroque which was more classical than Oriental in inspiration. It shares the low proportions, broad banister, carved shells, and eagle's claw feet of English Georgian chairs of the 1730s and 1740s, perhaps similar to the twelve "Carved Fineer'd Chairs & a Couch" owned by Peter Faneuil which were valued at £105 in 1743. Some of the best quality Boston-made Georgian chairs feature three-dimensional carved shells with acanthus and cabochon elements attributed to the carver John Welch (1711-1789).[9] The simpler but well modeled shell atop a C-scroll and the shell-carved knees on this chair may be the work of another shop. Notably, although most other chairs of this type are made from black walnut, this chair is made from cedrela (*C. odorata*), a tropical hardwood known in the eighteenth century as "Spanish cedar." The chair lacks the dramatically figured veneered banister which features prominently in the design of the walnut chairs, although a board with a vertical, striped figure was chosen for the broad vasiform banister.

8 The attribution of many Queen Anne-style chairs to Boston is based on the research of Leigh Keno, Joan Barzilay Freund, and Alan Miller in "The Very Pink of the Mode: Boston Georgian Chairs, Their Export and Their Influence," in Luke Beckerdite, ed., *American Furniture,* (Milwaukee: The Chipstone Foundation, 1996), 266-306. The Yates family chair is cat. 5 in John L. Scherer, *New York Furniture at the New York State Museum,* (Alexandria, Va.: Highland House Publishers, 1984), 9. The Aspinwall chair is cat.11 in Alexandra W. Rollins, ed., *Treasures of State: Fine and Decorative Arts in the Diplomatic Reception Rooms,* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991), 92.

9 Suffolk County Probate Records, docket 7877. Keno, et al., "Boston Georgian Chairs," 273-85.

6

Chair, 1755-75 (one of a pair)

New York, New York

Mahogany

38 1/2 x 24 1/8 x 22 1/2 *inches*



IN THE 1750S, NEW YORK BECAME the North American headquarters for the British army, which spurred a period of remarkable growth and prosperity in that city. An entourage of military officials and political leaders and an infusion of money provided patronage for the city's artisans and attracted immigrant craftsmen trained in the latest European fashions. An advertisement by John Brinner, a cabinet- and chairmaker from London, demonstrates the presence of skilled craftsmen who could make "all Sorts of plain and ornamental chairs, Sofa Beds, Sofa Settees, Couch and easy Chair Frames," in the 1750s and 1760s. Rococo-style motifs such as the bands of rocaille ornament on the crest rail and banister and motifs such as the tassel design in the back, the heavy applied gadrooning on the front rail, and the C-scrolled leaf carving on the knees are all ornaments which appear on at least one closely related English chair. A set of similar chairs imported from England or an immigrant craftsman like Brinner could have been the source for this popular New York chair design.[10]

Chairs of this type were particularly favored by the van Rensselaer family; at least four nearly identical sets of chairs of this design have descended from members of that prominent eighteenth-century New York family. The present chair, one of a pair, is identical to several other examples in museum collections, including a pair in the Karolik Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and one at the Albany Institute of History and Art with a history of descent from Stephen van Rensselaer (1742-1769). The mate to the present chair is numbered VII, as is the seat frame of one of the Karolik Collection chairs, suggesting that these four chairs probably share an earlier history. This chair was purchased about 1957 from the Noble family of Pelham Manor, New York, but no prior provenance is known.

10 John T. Kirk, *American Furniture in the British Tradition to 1830*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), fig. 934; J. Stewart Johnson, "Cabinetmaking in New York Prior to the Revolution," (unpublished master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1965), 10; Rita Susswein Gottesman, *The Arts and Crafts in New York, 1726-1776*, (New York: The New-York Historical Society, 1938), 110.

7
Chair, 1755-75 (one of a pair)

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Mahogany, maple
40 1/2 x 25 1/2 x 23 1/2 inches



THIS CHAIR'S BANISTER OR SPLAT ILLUSTRATES one of the earliest "open back" patterns used in Philadelphia. Its interlaced strapwork design does not have a direct source in an English pattern book; instead it was probably transmitted to the colonies either by imported chairs or through immigrant craftsmen arriving in the 1750s. Interestingly, this particular early pattern was used for a wide variety of chairs, ranging from essentially Queen Anne-style to Chippendale-style chairs both walnut and mahogany, plain and elaborate, including a unique set of ornately carved mahogany chairs made about 1760 for John Lambert of Coryell's Ferry, New Jersey. Overall, the design is relatively plain with select passages of rich, scrolling acanthus foliage on the crest rail, and surrounding the cabochons on the knees. The knee carving is identical to that on an easy chair and a high chest of drawers, and it may be the work of a carver responsible for the rich foliate carving on a dozen chairs, tables and stands, and case furniture.[11]



Detail of crest rail

Although no eighteenth-century history of ownership is known, chairs from this set have a distinguished twentieth-century provenance, having been included in several important early collections, exhibitions, and publications on American furniture. This chair, number three in a set, or its mate was exhibited in The Girl Scouts Loan Exhibition, a 1929 showcase of eighteenth-century American furniture and other decorative arts held at the American Art Association Galleries in New York. The chair was also in the collection of Howard Reifsnyder and George H. Lorimer, two noted early collectors. In 1950, one was also illustrated in Albert Sack's *Fine Points of Furniture,* in which he praised the chair's "perfection of line and superior craftsmanship" and noted "the depth of the well-placed and restrained carving," qualities which epitomize the best Philadelphia Chippendale furniture.[12]

Detail of leg



11 The easy chair is illustrated in Charles F. Hummel, *A Winterthur Guide to American Chippendale Furniture: Middle Atlantic and Southern Colonies,* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1976), 56.

12 Albert Sack, *Fine Points of Furniture: Early American,* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1950), 35.

8
Chair, 1760-80
(one of a pair)

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Mahogany, yellow-poplar, Atlantic white cedar
39 x 23 3/8 x 22 1/2 inches

9
Chair, 1760-80

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Mahogany, maple
40 x 24 3/4 x 22 1/2 inches

In the 1760s Philadelphia surpassed Boston and New York as the most populous city in the American colonies and became one of the largest English-speaking cities in the world, after London, Edinburgh, and Dublin. Philadelphia's prosperity at about mid century attracted a large number of British and European immigrants, which infused the city's artisanal community with skilled craftsmen conversant in the latest English rococo style. Immigrant cabinetmakers such as John Elliott (w.1753-1791) and Thomas Affleck (w.1763-1795), the London-trained carvers Hercules Courtenay (c.1744-1784) and James Reynolds (c.1736-1794), and the carvers Nicholas Bernard (d.1789) and Martin Jugiez (d.1815) all produced furniture or interior architectural carving which rank among the most complete expressions of the rococo style in America. The flourishing of the rococo style and patronage of Philadelphia's best immigrant craftsmen coincided with a period of increasing tension after the signing of non-importation agreements in the late 1760s. Thus, anti-British sentiments in the decade before the Revolution may have encouraged Philadelphia's elites to buy fashionable, London-style furniture made by local, if not native, craftsmen.[13]

Highly carved furniture made in the 1760s and 1770s often demonstrates the direct influence of pattern book sources such as Thomas Chippendale's *Gentlemen's and Cabinetmaker's Director,* published in three editions between 1754 and 1762. It is likely that Thomas Affleck brought a copy to Philadelphia in 1763 (he owned one at the time of his death in 1795) and the Library Company—which counted at least nine prominent cabinetmakers among its members—acquired a copy of the third edition between 1764 and 1769. One of a pair of chairs, Cat. 8's design was probably inspired by several plates published in the 1762 edition of *The Director*: the back is modeled after plate X, and details such as the shaping of the front rail and carved knee brackets suggest an awareness of the pattern book or designs which it inspired. The chair back's pattern of trefoils and quatrefoils in the Gothic taste proved popular and was evidently made by a number of craftsmen in both carved and plain versions. Three chairs from a set of four with plain legs and rails also inspired by Chippendale's design bear the label of the Philadelphia cabinet- and chairmaker James Gillingham (1736-1781); according to changes in his shop address, the chairs must date between 1768 and 1773.[14] Although its maker cannot yet be identified, this chair is one of a set of at least six chairs which probably descended from Isaac and Catherine (Wistar) Greenleafe, who married in 1753. In 1935 these chairs were owned by one of their descendants, Eliza Davids, and were published in William Macpherson Hornor's landmark *Blue Book Philadelphia Furniture.*[15] Although photographed with reproduction wool fabric, these chairs retain their Victorian-era tapestry upholstery as pictured in Hornor's *Blue Book*.



9
CHAIR, 1760-80



Cat. 9 also adapts a design from Chippendale's *Director,* one which was reserved for some of the most ornately carved rococo-style chairs made in Philadelphia. Another set of chairs in this pattern is nearly an exact copy after the pattern book plate with scroll feet and carving of remarkable depth, which is attributed to the partnership of Nicholas Bernard and Martin Jugiez (w.1762-1783). The maker of this chair used more conventional flat arched seat rails, cabriole legs, and claw feet, although many of the carved motifs are consistent. As is common with designs by Chippendale and other English rococo furniture designers, these chairs freely combine rococo motifs such as carved shells, foliage, and scrolls, with lozenges in the Gothic style, and elements of the Chinese taste, such as the central crossing in the opening of the banister. This chair is number nine in a set of perhaps ten to twelve chairs; it appears to be from the same set as chairs in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Winterthur.[16]

13 Morrison H. Heckscher, "Philadelphia Chippendale: The Influence of the Director in America," in *Furniture History,* (1985), 287.

14 Heckscher, *American Furniture,* 100-103. Gillingham was also a member of the Library Company and would have had access to their copy of Chippendale's *Director.*

15 William Macpherson Hornor, Jr., *Blue Book Philadelphia Furniture, William Penn to George Washington,* (Philadelphia, 1935), pl. 347. An identical chair in the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art is numbered VI. Heckscher, *American Furniture,* cat. 54.

16 The plates are XII in the 1754 edition of Chippendale's Director and plate XIIII [sic] in the 1762 edition. The heavily carved chair is illustrated in Morrison H. Heckscher and Leslie Greene Bowman, *American Rococo, 1750-1775: Elegance in Ornament,* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), 209. The Winterthur chairs are illustrated in Hummel, *American Chippendale Furniture,* fig. 52.

10
Chair, 1775

Eliphalet Chapin, 1741-1807
East Windsor, Connecticut
Black cherry, pine
38 1/2 x 23 3/4 x 22 inches

11
Chair, 1775

Eliphalet Chapin, 1741-1807
East Windsor, Connecticut
Black cherry, pine
38 1/2 x 23 3/4 x 22 inches



Although it was common for the daughters of well-to-do parents to receive gifts of furniture and other household goods when they married, few such sets of furnishings have survived intact or have been identified. One of the most complete sets of marriage furniture known is that made for Anna Grant Marsh (1748-1838), the daughter of Ebenezer Grant (1706-1797), a merchant in East Windsor, Connecticut. Grant's purchase of household furniture from Eliphalet Chapin is recorded in his account book on December 6, 1775, at the time of Anna's marriage to Reverend John Marsh (1742-1821), a minister in nearby Wethersfield.[17] The furniture provided to furnish the Marshes' parlors and chambers comprised three bedsteads; six of each of three types of chairs and two armchairs; tables for tea, breakfast, and dining; two candlestands and one [fire]screen frame. Of the thirty-one objects itemized in the order, at least nineteen have been identified, including the "Stand Table" (Cat. 19), the two patterns of chairs with "claw feet" (Cat. 10, 11), and a "Marlboro" leg chair (fig.1).[18]



17 For other examples of setting up a household or "going to housekeeping," see Jane Nylander, *Our Own Snug Fireside: Images of the New England Home*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 54-73. New research on the Chapin shops and the Grant-Marsh commission is fully explored and the ledger entry illustrated in Joseph Lionetti and Robert F. Trent, "New information about Chapin chairs," in *The Magazine Antiques*, CXXV, no.5 (1986), 1082-1095.

18 Trent and Lionetti, "Chapin chairs," 1088-91.

Eliphalet Chapin probably learned his trade in the shop of an East Windsor, Connecticut, cabinetmaker, but the case furniture, tables, and chairs he produced in the 1770s and 1780s are clearly influenced by the two or more years in the late 1760s which Chapin spent working as a journeyman in Philadelphia. The design and construction of these chairs strongly resemble Philadelphia work with features such as carved shells and deeply scrolled volutes on the crest rails, round-section rear legs, and wedged through-tenons which join the rear legs and side seat rails. The splat pattern of Cat. 10 relates to an interlaced design used in Philadelphia chairs from the 1750s (Cat. 7) and an "owl's eye" design used frequently in chairs made in eastern New England. The diamond and interlace pattern on Cat. 11 is one used infrequently in the colonies, and Chapin could have modeled it from either an English chair he had seen or perhaps one from New York where this pattern was occasionally used.



figure 1
CHAIR, 1775
Eliphalet Chapin, 1741-1807
Black cherry, pine
36 7/8 x 21 3/4 x 20 1/2 inches

12

Great Chair, 1750-80

Probably Hartford, Connecticut area
Painted maple and ash, rush seat
50 x 24 x 25 inches



THIS EXAMPLE IS ONE OF A TYPE OF CHAIRS now attributed to a shop tradition practiced by several generations of craftsmen from the Spencer, Pease, and Clark families, woodworkers in the Hartford, Connecticut, area who were linked by training and marriage. This closely knit network probably favored the development of a durable regional style of chairmaking in central Connecticut in the eighteenth century.[19] Chairs similar to this example were likely patterned after English or Boston-made chairs of the early baroque or William and Mary style, first imported to the region in the late 1720s and 1730s. These early imports had bended or "crooked" backs and academically inspired vasiform and columnar turnings, which local chairmakers adapted and made continuously with only subtle design changes until 1800 and possibly even later.[20] The simplified turnings of the stretchers and legs suggest that this chair probably dates to the latter half of the eighteenth century, although it retains many early elements. The sloped, scrolled arms, arched "crown" crest, turned spindles mounted horizontally below the arms, and columnar posts and turned banisters all appear in chairs made a generation earlier. A distinct difference within this shop tradition is the orientation of the banisters with their convex surfaces facing inward rather that outward, a design choice which gives the chair an unusually vigorous quality.

"Great chair" refers not to this chair's size, but its arms: elements which confer status and provide comfort. In modern terminology this chair is a "banister back," a term derived from the turned and split banister-like spindles which fill the space between the back posts. Chairs of this type were constructed of round-turned elements made on a lathe and assembled using round tenons and drilled mortises. Turned chairs are often made from a number of woods such as maple, poplar, or ash—widely available woods which were particularly suited to turning. They are often painted black. Their seats are woven from plant fibers such as rush, ash, or even corn husks. Although the materials, method of manufacture, and appearance of this chair might suggest economy or even rusticity, turned and painted chairs with rush bottoms were used in sets in both urban and rural homes in surprisingly formal settings, including secondary parlors and bed chambers, and other spaces where less expensive but still fashionable seating was required.

19 Robert F. Trent, "The Spencer Chairs and Regional Chair Making in the Connecticut River Valley 1639-1830," *The Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin*, 49:4 (Fall 1984), 175-193. Benno M. Forman, *American Seating Furniture 1630-1730*, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988), 59.

20 Trent, "Spencer Chairs," 177-91.

13
Windsor Armchair, 1790-1800 (one of six)

Rhode Island or Connecticut
Painted pine, hickory, ash
36 5/8 x 21 x 21 3/8 inches



WINDSOR CHAIRS WERE NOVEL, FASHIONABLE, AND moderately priced seating owned in the American colonies by the 1730s. Although the technique of assembling simple seating from planks and sticks is an ancient one, London chairmakers first made seating with turned legs, posts, and spindles and shaped plank seats about 1720. The term derives from Windsor Castle where these simple and practical chairs were used as lightweight, garden seating. The first reference to Windsor chair production in the colonies is a 1745 advertisement placed in a Williamsburg newspaper by the London-trained upholsterer Richard Caulton. Craftsmen in Philadelphia were the first to manufacture Windsors extensively and they developed a number of distinctive patterns. By the time of the Revolution, Windsor chairmakers in New York and New England also produced Windsor seating for both local consumption and export. By the 1790s many smaller communities throughout the United States also supported Windsor chairmakers who produced seating for local markets.[21]

This chair, one of a set of six, features a molded continuous arm made, as the name suggests, from a single piece of wood bent to shape. This arm design, made first by New York Windsor chairmakers about 1790, was transferred to makers in southern New England. The oval-shaped seat plank is a feature of early New York chairs and is a pattern more often used for the seats of sack-back Windsors, which may also provide evidence of the maker's origin, training, and his usual production. Similar chairs have been found across a wide geographic region from southern New England to New York state. Overall this chair relates most closely to other examples made in a region of rural, western Rhode Island and eastern Connecticut. In particular, the long, attenuated balusters of the turned legs are distinctive features of a number of chairs from this Rhode Island-Connecticut border region. Interestingly, this chair also closely relates to a number of chairs with even more simplified leg turnings made by one or more craftsmen working probably in Montreal, Quebec, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A nearly identical chair with a nineteenth-century Deerfield, Massachusetts history is now thought to be the work of a Canadian chairmaker, conceivably an apprentice or journeyman who trained or worked with the maker of this handsome set.[22]

The general taste for painted furniture and the use of a combination of woods selected for their physical qualities such as strength, resilience, and suitability for turning or bending, encouraged painting of Windsor chairs. Green and black were the most common colors; this chair was originally painted green, and subsequently white or cream and brown. Although the seat was purposely hollowed for the sitter's comfort, at some later date these chairs were probably upholstered for greater comfort, as suggested by the lack of brown paint on the seat and tack holes on the underside. Although Windsor chairs were occasionally made to be upholstered, the seat planks of those chairs are often unshaped.

21 Nancy Goyne Evans, *American Windsor Chairs,* (Winterthur, Del.: The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1996), 36-68.

22 Nancy Goyne Evans, correspondence with the author, February 1999. Evans, *Windsor Chairs,* 655-6.

14
Easy Chair, 1750-65

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Black walnut, yellow pine, yellow-poplar
45 1/2 x 37 1/4 x 33 *inches*

In form this easy chair adapts the generous proportions of English easy chairs made in the 1720s with boldly shaped "cheeks" or wings, double scrolled arms, a high back with arched crest rail, compass front seat rail, and cabriole legs. This example, with carved claw feet and shell-carved knees, is the classic Philadelphia interpretation of the Queen Anne-style easy chair form of the mid-eighteenth century. The earliest known Philadelphia easy chair is one made for James Logan of "Stenton" about 1735, a walnut chair with four cabriole legs and pad feet which also retains much of its original upholstery foundations. Easy chairs are mentioned regularly in advertisements of Philadelphia's upholsterers and cabinetmakers by about 1740. The earliest reference may be that of Plunkett Fleeson (w.1739-1775), an upholsterer from London and Dublin, whose 1739 advertisement invited potential customers to visit him "at the Sign of the Easy Chair." That same year the joiner Robert Barton advertised that he made and sold "Walnut, Mohogany, Easy, Close-Stool, and Ship-Chairs, and Stools, Couches, and Settees."[23]

Because upholstery materials such as linen sackcloth and webbing, curled horsehair, and imported wool fabrics and silk or wool trims were so costly, the upholstery of easy chairs embodied substantially greater expense than even carved mahogany frames. For example, an easy chair which Plunkett Fleeson made in 1764 for Nicholas Brown cost in total about £10. Upholstery materials and labor including eleven yards of green harateen and eighteen yards of silk trim cost more than £7, while the mahogany frame cost just over £2.[24] By eighteenth-century standards, upholstered easy chairs were furnishings which made dramatic expressions of wealth, yet, surprisingly, they were rarely seen in the parlors of Philadelphia's elites. Instead, references in household inventories and other documents show that easy chairs were most often used in bed-chambers, where they provided warm and comfortable seating, particularly for invalids or the elderly. This function and their placement in bedchambers further encouraged the use of removable loose covers, often, but not always, made of washable, printed cotton. In addition, easy chairs and other chamber seating were usually upholstered to match suits of bed hangings and window curtains of wool and cotton, which were seasonally taken down and stored. The c.1735 Logan easy chair was originally covered with blue moreen, a durable, plain-weave wool fabric. Blue, green, yellow, and red or crimson wool moreens and damasks were the textiles most commonly chosen for upholstery and bed and window hangings in eighteenth-century Philadelphia. Until about 1980, this chair retained its original curled hair and linen upholstery foundation, which unfortunately was removed by a previous owner; the chair is presently upholstered with a reproduction green wool damask. In this century, the chair was owned in the Murray family of Annapolis, Maryland, and traditionally descended from Samuel Morris (1711-1782), a Philadelphia merchant, who married Hannah Cadwalader in 1737.

23 The Logan chair was sold at Christie's, New York, June 21, 1995, lot 217. Advertisements quoted in Alfred Coxe Prime, *The Arts and Crafts of Philadelphia, Maryland, and South Carolina, 1721-1785*, (The Walpole Society, 1929), 201-2, 217-8.

24 Quoted in Wendy A. Cooper, "The Furniture and Furnishings of the John Brown House," (unpublished master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1971), 24-25.



15
Easy Chair, 1760-85

Newport, Rhode Island
Mahogany, maple, black cherry,
yellow pine, yellow-poplar
46 1/2 x 34 x 24 1/2 inches



FEWER THAN TWENTY CHAIRMAKERS and only a handful of upholsterers have been identified among the more than one-hundred furniture makers active in Newport, Rhode Island during the eighteenth century. Current scholarship suggests that during the first half of the century, Boston-made export seat furniture in the late baroque or Queen Anne style dominated the market for chairs sold in Newport and elsewhere in Rhode Island. By 1760, coincident with a sharp decline in Boston's economy and influence, joined chairs may have been a commodity regularly produced by Newport's cabinetmakers and joiners. One easy chair with Irish-stitch needlework covers long attributed to Newport by the inscription on the crest rail: "Gardner Jr/Newport May/1758" has recently been reassigned to Boston on the basis of similar chair frames and the needlework landscape which forms the outback. Thus this easy chair and several related examples may represent the earliest collaborations of joined chairmakers and upholsterers in Newport working shortly after mid-century. The claw and ball feet with elongated balls and talons and squared cabriole legs are strongly reminiscent of an upholstered open arm chair with shell-carved knees probably made in the 1760s.[25]

Curiously, in its construction this chair has a somewhat improvised or experimental quality, which seems to indicate a craftsman building a chair whose form he had perhaps seen but not previously made. The chair's double scroll arm is a design which appears only rarely on Massachusetts upholstered furniture made after 1730, although this arm design was used on a number of Newport easy chairs with either cabriole or Marlborough legs.[26] Some joints, such as the spliced joining of the stiles and rear legs, are executed in a manner more commonly found in mid-Atlantic easy chairs, wherein the stiles overlap the legs on the exterior face and are secured with screws. Overall, the double scroll arms, circular front seat rail, claw-and-ball front legs with shell-carved knees, round-section rear legs, and the lack of a joined stretcher base link this chair to rococo or Chippendale-style easy chairs made in New York and Philadelphia. At least three Philadelphia-made easy chairs were purchased in the 1760s by the Providence merchants John and Nicholas Brown through their agent John Relfe. To fill the Brown's orders, Relfe turned to the British-trained upholsterer Plunkett Fleeson, whose shop was designated by "the Sign of the Easy Chair." An itemized bill dated April 1764 for the third easy chair procured for Nicholas Brown specified a mahogany easy chair upholstered in green harateen and fitted with castors. Perhaps a Philadelphia easy chair of this type provided the inspiration for the Rhode Island furniture maker who constructed this example.[27]

The expense of upholstery materials and their textile coverings determined that easy chairs were never commonplace in Newport or elsewhere in the American colonies; a survey of household inventories taken between 1780 and 1800 found one in only four percent of Newport bedchambers. This chair retains some of its original upholstery foundations on the inside arms and cheeks as well as linen webbing in the back. Evidence of earlier upholstery treatments in the frame such as nail and tack holes suggest that this chair did not have an ornamental border of brass nails, but was likely trimmed with a silk or mixed silk and wool tape. Presently this chair is upholstered with a dark blue reproduction wool camlet and matching wool-and-silk trims.

25 Joan Barzilay Freund and Leigh Keno, "The Making and Marketing of Boston Seating Furniture in the Late Baroque Style," in Luke Beckerdite, ed., *American Furniture,* (Milwaukee: The Chipstone Foundation, 1998), 32-3. The easy chair is illustrated in Heckscher, *American Furniture,* 122-4. The open arm chair is illustrated as Figure 1.52 in Michael Moses, *Master Craftsmen of Newport: The Townsends and Goddards,* (Tenafly, NJ: MMI Americana Press, 1984), 60.

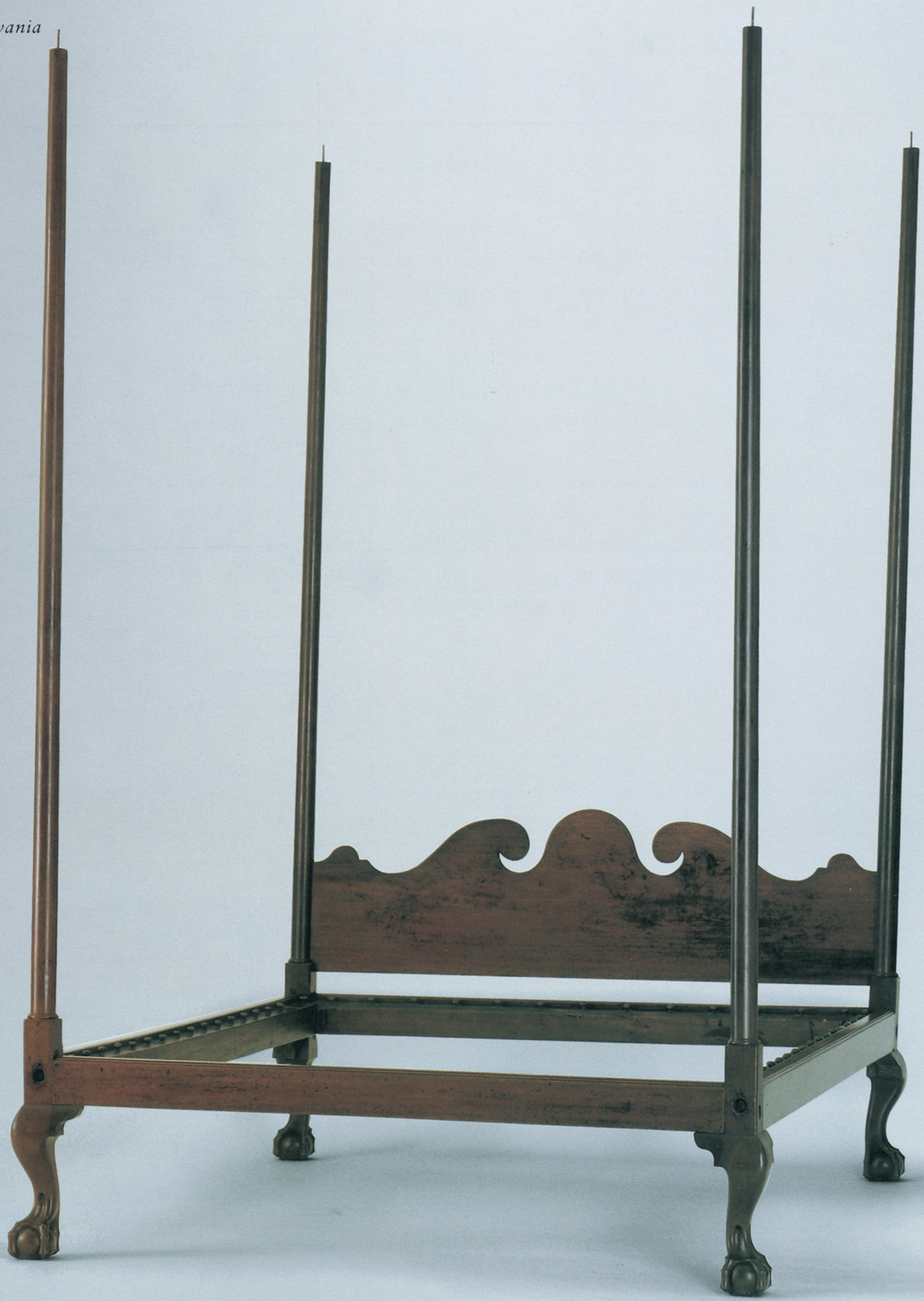
26 One example in the Concord Museum is illustrated in David Wood, ed. *The Concord Museum: History of a Collection,* (Concord, Mass.: 1997) 29B, 69-71.; another in the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum is illustrated in Richards and Evans, *New England Furniture*, cat. no. 78. Double scroll arms are seen on an easy chair with pad feet, figure 7.4 in Moses, *Master Craftsmen,* 275.; and a stop-fluted Marlborough leg version is figure 8, in Morrison H. Heckscher, "Form and frame: new thoughts on the American easy chair," *The Magazine Antiques* CIII, no. 6 (1971), 889.

27 Quoted in Cooper, "Furniture of the John Brown House," 24-6. A Philadelphia easy chair sold October 26, 1985 at Sotheby's, New York, lot 18, traditionally belonged to John Brown. A nearly identical Philadelphia-style easy chair also with a Brown family history advertised by the firm John S. Walton in 1974 is reportedly a Newport copy of John Brown's Philadelphia original. See *The Magazine Antiques* CVI, no. 5 (1974), 692. Alan Miller proposed the relationship between Brown's chair and this example, which will be the subject of a forthcoming article by Miller.

16

Bedstead, 1760-80

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Mahogany, hickory
93 1/2 x 77 x 57 inches





16
Bedstead, 1760-80

In the eighteenth century the best bed, consisting of the bedstead, the bed hangings, and the bed or mattress, was among the most valuable household goods an individual possessed. The greatest expense was in the dozens of yards of imported textiles and trims from which the hangings—called furniture—were made. Newspaper advertisements, bills, and other documentary sources illustrate the range of choices of fashionable bed hangings available at the time this bedstead was made. An advertisement placed in 1776 by the Philadelphia upholsterer Hyns Taylor informed the public that he made all kinds of bed furniture in the newest fashion: "Dome, [tester], drapery, Venetian, [and] Gothic [style] canopy, four-post[,] and couch beds; also field and camp beds, [and] all sorts of mattresses."[28] Although a cabinetmaker supplied the bedstead, an upholsterer furnished the materials and labor required to fabricate and install the bedstead, bed hangings, and en suite window curtains, chair seats, and loose covers, and often supplied the "beds" or mattresses, bolsters, pillows, and often carpets.

This example is one of only a handful of eighteenth-century American bedsteads made with four cabriole legs and carved claw feet. Although it lacks extensive carving, this "neat and plain" bedstead was likely made for a person of means, because of the extensive use of mahogany, the choice of a sacking bottom, and the overall design and neat workmanship. The turned head and foot posts are made from primary wood, mahogany, and each terminates in a cabriole leg with a carved claw and ball foot and a caster which facilitated movement and also protected the talons from wear. Each mahogany rail is finished with a bead on the inner top edge and a quarter round on the outer. The headboard on this example is also unusual because it is made from mahogany and detailed with a repeating ogee profile. In a fully draped eighteenth-century bed, the headboard was obscured by the headcloth, a fabric panel suspended from the cornice and draped in front of it. Consequently headboards are typically arched or triangular in profile and usually are made from pine or yellow-poplar, a common mid-Atlantic secondary wood. The initials "JB" are stamped in the back of the headboard.

The bedstead also survives in excellent condition, retaining much evidence of its original treatment, including the neatly turned hickory pins which were used to support a sacking bottom. In fact, the rails bear impressions around the pins of the interlaced ropes created by the substantial weight of the bed's feather and curled hair mattresses as well as its occupants. Sacking bottoms were preferable because they created a firmer support, although the added expense of an upholsterer's labor and imported materials such as "Russia duck," meant that sacking bottoms were reserved for the best beds.

Few eighteenth-century American bedsteads have survived with either their wooden tester frames which supported the hangings or the ornamental molded or carved cornices which surmounted the whole. Nevertheless, some evidence of the bedstead's original treatment survives. The posts have cracked and split at the top which suggests that they carried a tester and cornice of substantial weight. In addition, the lack of cloak pin holes in the posts indicate that the original hangings were not gathered or "drapery" curtains, which became fashionable in the 1770s. A set of camlet bed hangings have been made following a harateen valance in the collection of The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. The original, which descended in the Robbins family of Lexington, Massachusetts, was either imported from England or possibly constructed by a Boston upholsterer in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, using imported worsted fabric and trims made of silk and wool. Philadelphia probate inventories indicate a preference for bed hangings made from moreen or harateen, which, like camlet, were durable plain-weave, worsted fabrics, widely used in the eighteenth century as furniture, or furnishing textiles. Blue, green, crimson, and yellow harateen are among the colors most commonly cited in Philadelphia bedchambers. The reproduction cornice is made of mahogany, molded and varnished, and is adapted from an eighteenth-century example in the collection of Colonial Williamsburg.[29]

28 Prime, *Arts and Crafts,* 212-3.

29 Three rare eighteenth-century American cornices for drapery beds demonstrate molded, shaped, and "cut open" cornices which were painted or fabric-covered, techniques which would otherwise be known only by references in craftsmen's bills and advertisements. A molded, serpentine cornice with printed cotton glued to its outer surface is at Williamsburg. Florence M. Montgomery, *Textiles in America* 1650-1870, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), fig.33. A carved and painted cornice and a carved "cut open" cornice with later blue resist-dyed fabric glued to the wooden cornice are in the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Heckscher, *American Furniture,* cat. 89, 90. Natalie Larson of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation designed and fabricated the bed hangings in 1998-9.

17
Tea Table, 1740-60

Newport, Rhode Island
Mahogany
25 7/8 x 31 1/4 x 20 7/8 inches



SQUARE TEA TABLES OF THIS PARTICULAR DESIGN are associated with eighteenth-century Rhode Island. Although none is documented to a Rhode Island maker, many have histories of ownership in the region, and their simple but distinctive form relates to other mid-eighteenth-century Rhode Island furniture, particularly the sleek, square cabriole legs ending in pointed pad feet. The top, suggesting a tray or "waiter," is formed by applied ovolo-and-astragal moldings surrounding the top and skirt. Although this table lacks knee brackets, many similar examples have either C-scroll- or ogee-shaped quarter-round brackets which provide a smooth transition from the skirt to the legs; perhaps knee brackets were one of the customer's few options for reducing the cost of this simple table.

Tea tables of this form were made beginning in the 1740s and probably continuing into the 1760s, although Rhode Island craftsmen produced other tea table designs as well. A tripod-base table with a circular, tilting top was known in Newport as a "fly tea table" and in Providence (and elsewhere, see Cat. 19) as a "stand table," which was available in mahogany, black walnut, and maple.[30] A square tea table made by John Goddard, now at Winterthur, appears to feature that Newport cabinetmaker's full repertoire of "extras," including carved knees, open-talon claw feet, a deeply molded and dished tray top, and blocked, ogee-shaped "swelled" rails. That example was made in 1763 for the wealthy Providence, Rhode Island merchant Jabez Bowen. By contrast, a "common tea table," possibly of painted maple or pine, was one of the least expensive forms of furniture made by joiners in Providence according to the 1756-57 price lists. That tea tables were made across a wide spectrum of style and cost underscores the importance of both the service of tea and tea furnishings for the parlors of eighteenth-century Americans. Residents of Newport, in particular, relished the consumption of tea. As a French naval officer observed, perhaps with dismay, in 1781, "They use much tea and this sober infusion constitutes the chief pleasure of their lives;...upon entering a house, the greatest mark of civility and welcome they can show you is to invite you to drink it with them."[31]

30 The term was first used in 1757 by Job Townsend. The only documented fly tea table is one made by John Goddard for James Atkinson in 1774, cited in Moses, *Master Craftsmen,* 199.

31 Quoted in Wendell Garrett, "The Newport Interior, 1780-1800," (unpublished master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1957), 77. According to the Providence price list, maple and mahogany tea tables cost from £15 to £22. The cost of a "common tea table" is £7, roughly the value of white pine cradle and a sea chest.



18

Tea Table, 1755-75

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Mahogany, iron

27 3/4 x 33 3/4 (diameter)

In eighteenth-century Philadelphia tripod base or "pillar and claw" tables were the predominant form of tea table. A 1772 price list itemizes only a limited range of optional extras, such as claw and ball feet, carved acanthus "leaves" on the knees, and fluting on the pillar. However, the best examples often feature deeply molded "scollop'd" tops reminiscent of silver salvers and waiters, and dynamic compositions of rococo-style scroll and foliate carving on the legs and pillar. The pillar is a precisely rendered Doric column, whose principal ornament is the striped figure mahogany from which it is turned. The dense, symmetrical pattern of carved leaves on the cabriole legs may indicate a date of manufacture about the first flourishing of the rococo style in the late 1750s.[32] This table's top is embellished with an unusually rich composition of twelve arched segments flanked by ogee curves and C-scrolls. When not in use, pillar and claw tea tables with folding tops could be moved to the side or corner of a room where their polished tops and carved edges made an ornamental display.

Tea drinking played a central role in the everyday lives of colonial Americans, particularly women. Diaries, letters, and other sources document the daily ritual of taking and hosting tea, a primary benefit being social interaction between the sexes as dictated by etiquette. A sketch of a Philadelphia tea party of about 1780 by a male friend of the young Nancy Shippen, for example, demonstrates the pivotal role which women of a household performed in the service of tea. The Shippens' tea table was placed in the parlor near the fireplace with Nancy and her mother stationed nearby and flanked by father, a male guest, a butler, and three "strangers." This social ritual also fueled the development and distribution of an extensive array of household goods, including ceramics, glassware, and metals, as well as furniture, intended for serving and consuming this beverage. Household inventories also reveal how tea tables were loaded to display a requisite assemblage of tea wares. In 1790, for example, William Oliphant's Philadelphia parlor contained a mahogany tea table with a plated coffeepot, teapot, and sugar dish, two silver cream jugs, tea tongs, and eighteen tea and tablespoons, as well as a set of china.[33]

32 A Philadelphia tea table with a twelve-segment top in the Diplomatic Reception Rooms is Cat. 2 in Rollins, ed., *Treasures of State,* 80-1. The compact stance and shaping of the legs closely relate to an uncarved mahogany tea table bearing the engraved label of the Philadelphia cabinet and chairmaker Edward James (w.1760-d.1798). DAPC, accession 65.1591, Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum.

33 Quoted in Rodris Roth, "Tea-Drinking in Eighteenth-Century America: Its Etiquette and Equipage," in Robert St. George, ed. *Material Life in America,* 1600-1860, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1989), 448. William Oliphant Will, 1790:188, City and County of Philadelphia, Wills and Administrations.

19
Stand Table, 1775

Eliphalet Chapin, 1741-1807
East Windsor, Connecticut
Black cherry, iron
28 1/2 x 35 (diameter) inches



THE TABLE'S LOW, SWEEPING ANKLES AND the "box" or birdcage, which permits the top to rotate as well as tilt, relates this example to Philadelphia work which Eliphalet Chapin saw and likely made during his time as a journeyman cabinetmaker in Philadelphia in the late 1760s. The complex combination of turned moldings ornamenting the pillar which are echoed in the top's unusual molded edge suggest, however, a regional baroque style used on other round and serpentine-top tripod-base tables from central Connecticut. The existence of a broader regional style is further indicated by references such as that in the account book of Solomon Lathrop, a joiner in West Springfield, Massachusetts, who shipped "8 tea table pillars" to Windsor, Connecticut, in July 1783.[34]

Chapin translated a Philadelphia style to local conditions so successfully that he influenced the production of furniture for the region's elites until at least the end of the eighteenth century. He clearly adapted his production to suit local needs, using native woods and devising a number of cost-saving techniques. The table reveals an economical use of cherry wood, a native-grown hardwood generally substituted for imported mahogany and walnut. The top consists of three narrow boards joined with long square section battens screwed to the underside. Similarly, the stock from which the claw and ball feet are carved is glued up from three pieces of wood, and the stock from which the pillar is turned is glued from two smaller pieces of wood. Chapin's influence extended to other craftsmen: his second cousin, Aaron Chapin, who worked with him between 1774 and 1783; and Aaron's cousin, Aaron Colton, who may also have worked with the Chapins from about 1779 to 1783. A similar table in the Wadsworth Atheneum branded by Aaron Chapin's brother, Amzi, is further suggested by an itemization in the 1792 Hartford, Connecticut, price list for a "plain Tea or Stand Table, [turn'd] top 3 feet 2 inches with box," which cost £1.18.0.[35]

34 *The Great River: Art and Society in the Connecticut Valley* 1635-1820, (Hartford: Wadsworth Atheneum, 1985), 225-6.

35 *Ibid.*, 233-4. The Hartford price list was compiled by Aaron Chapin and Aaron Colton.

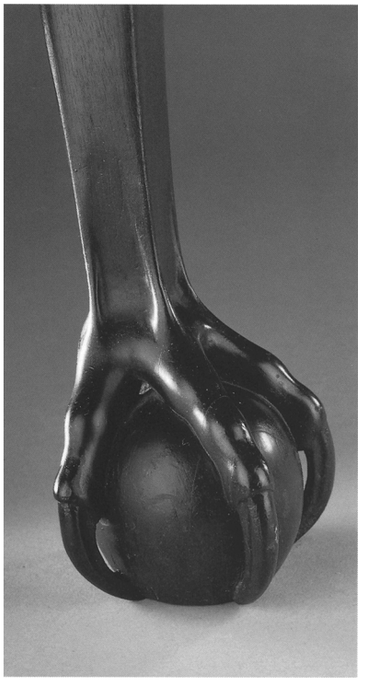
20

Dining Table, 1760-85

Attributed to John Goddard, 1723-1785
Newport, Rhode Island
Mahogany, maple, chestnut, pine
26 5/8 x 54 3/8 x 58 inches (open)



RECENT EFFORTS TO DISTINGUISH THE WORK of Newport's best-known cabinetmakers have relied on careful analysis of design, construction techniques, and carving, in addition to unique signifiers such as calligraphy. This table may be the work of the cabinetmaker John Goddard who also used a distinctive type of cross-bracing in a square dining table purchased by James Atkinson in 1774.[36] The table's carved claw and ball feet also share the well modeled claws whose well-defined tendons appear on several other documented Goddard tables. In this example, each talon and the palms of the claw feet are daringly and dramatically undercut from the ball. Characteristic of the best Newport furniture is the rich, dense mahogany and the simple but elegant design and generous proportions. This table also includes many extras, which would have added significantly to its cost. According to the 1757 Providence, Rhode Island price list, mahogany dining tables—whether round, oval, or square—were priced at £11 per foot; the cost of working the interlocking quarter round rule joints which join the table's leaves cost as much as 10 shillings per foot more than old fashioned, butt-jointed leaves. Probate inventories from the last two decades of the eighteenth century show that mahogany dining tables counted among the four most costly possessions in Newport households.[37]



Detail of claw and ball foot

Round or oval dining tables with drop leaves became common in the mid-seventeenth century; prior to that time, long tables on trestle bases were the more common furniture for dining, used with an armchair or two and "forms" or benches and stools. The change from rectangular to round tables seems to mark a departure from the hierarchy imposed by the older style tables and calculations of rank by proximity to the "chair man" at the head of the table. In contrast, round tables encircled by sets of six or more identical chairs provided a more congenial setting for genteel diners who were likely to be social equals.[38] As with the earlier trestle base form, tables with falling leaves could be folded and moved to the room's perimeter when not in use. Compactness and portability were necessities in the colonial period when most Americans dined in parlors or "keeping rooms," as they were called in Newport, which served a variety of functions. At the same time, tables such as this example could serve as a work surface for a variety of household tasks or it could be covered with woolen baize cloth for writing.

36 Moses, *Master Craftsmen,* 207, fig. 4.6.

37 Garrett, "The Newport Interior," 77.

38 Cary Carson, "The Consumer Revolution in Colonial British America: Why Demand?" in Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert, eds., *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century,* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia for the United States Capitol Historical Society, 1993), 592-3.

21

Sideboard Table, 1775-95

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Mahogany, yellow-poplar, yellow pine, Atlantic white cedar

35 5/8 x 72 x 26 inches



TABLE-FORM SIDEBOARDS WERE MADE in Philadelphia from the 1730s to the 1790s, as their occurrence in cabinetmaker's advertisements and price lists from those decades shows. Although wooden-topped sideboards are rare today, marble topped "slab tables" with either cabriole or Marlborough legs have survived in greater numbers. Both sideboards and slab tables performed similar functions as serving tables in rooms intended for dining and entertaining. According to a 1772 Philadelphia price list, which survives in manuscript form, a mahogany sideboard table with square "Marlborough" legs, block-like plinth feet or "bases," and pierced scrolled brackets, measuring six feet in length and two-and-one half feet in depth, cost £5. The price list also shows that the size could be adjusted to accommodate the table in its intended architectural setting, usually a recess or a pier in a parlor or dining room.

This table is enriched by a number of extras such as the "ribbon & flower" motif carved on the top, gadrooning on the lower edge, and pierced brackets between the leg and rails composed of "relieved" C-scrolls.[39] The molded legs are neatly tapered "therm" legs such as those illustrated in Thomas Chippendale's *Gentlemen's and Cabinet Maker's Director* in the 1750s and 1760s. Perhaps the most fashionable element in this table's design was not specified by the 1772 price book entry for sideboard tables: the "commode," or serpentine form of the front rail and top. The commode form is a distinguishing element of the most fully developed rococo-style furniture made in Philadelphia, the suite of card tables, sofas, and other furniture made for John Cadwalader in 1770. Only three entries in the price book specified a commode form which further suggests this was a relatively uncommon fashion in the early 1770s. By 1795 and 1796 Philadelphia price books demonstrate the increasing popularity of the serpentine shape for the term "commode" is used to modify tables, sideboards, chairs, easy chairs, sofas, and bed cornices.[40]

In his landmark *Blue Book Philadelphia Furniture*, William Macpherson Hornor illustrated a nearly identical sideboard table and noted its similarity to this example, owned at that time by George Washington Norris, Jr. Hornor further attributed these two sideboard tables to Thomas Affleck on the basis of a receipt book and a bill for furniture made for James Pemberton in 1775, although subsequent scholars have proposed another candidate for that sideboard. Despite the fact that the identity of its maker is less certain today, this sideboard table remains an elegant statement of style and lifestyle in Philadelphia in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.[41]

39 This motif was one of the architectural moldings carved by Hercules Courtenay in 1772 for John Dickinson. Quoted in Nicholas B. Wainwright, *Colonial Grandeur in Philadelphia: The House and Furniture of General John Cadwalader,* (Philadelphia: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1964), 143.

40 *The Philadelphia Cabinet & Chair-Makers' Book of Prices,* (Philadelphia: Richard Folwell, 1796), demonstrates the continuity of essentially Chippendale forms in the Marlborough style and the availability of objects in the classical style. This table is strongly reminiscent of a commode front sideboard table with "stone molding around the top and sides," either an ogee or enriched ovolo. An itemization for "Frames for Marble Slabs" was available with extras which include "commoding rails and brackets." The later book also suggests the current fashion of tapered "therm" legs, molded with "corner beads and hollows."

41 Hornor, *Blue Book*, 183. A marble-topped Marlborough leg sideboard table attributed to Thomas Affleck now in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art is considered to be Affleck's work for James Pemberton. Marion S. Carson, "Thomas Affleck, A London cabinetmaker in colonial Philadelphia," *Connoisseur,* CLXVII, no. 673 (1968), 191.

22
Dressing Table, 1705-1715

Boston, Massachusetts, area
Black walnut and walnut veneer, maple, oak, pine
28 7/8 x 32 x 20 inches



BOSTON INVENTORIES FROM THE 1690S THROUGH THE 1720S demonstrate that a number of terms were used to describe several different forms of chamber furniture intended for dressing. In 1705, for example, the Boston merchant Daniel Zachary owned a "case of Draws, table, and Dressing Box," a triumvirate of forms that most likely included a high chest of drawers with a matching dressing table perhaps similar to this example, on which was placed a dressing box with drawers for small articles and possibly a small dressing glass. Another term used widely in the 1720s and 1730s is "twilight" table, a phonetic corruption of *toilette,* which referred to the 'little cloths' of muslin or linen which were draped on the table and around the shoulders to protect clothing while applying cosmetics or powder.[42] In 1718, the hall chamber of the Boston merchant John Mico contained two suites of dressing furniture including "1 Large Glass...1 Table & Twilight" and "1 Table Dress:g box, 2 Stands & Chest of Drawers." Mico's best bed chamber assemblages are reminiscent of a decorative scheme which found favor in bed chambers at the French court in the late seventeenth century and could be found in English estates in the early eighteenth century. That composition, which one scholar has termed a "triad," consisted of a bureaux (a dressing table with banks of drawers), a looking glass mounted above, and a pair of torchères or candle-stands flanking the whole.[43]

Appropriately, French courtly fashion was also the inspiration for the design of this table, which is rooted in the highly ornamental, classically inspired European baroque style. The modern term for furniture in this style, "William and Mary" derives from the monarchy of William III and Mary, who jointly ascended to the English throne in 1689. Their patronage of French Huguenot designers such as the influential Daniel Marot and a diaspora of Huguenot artisans throughout northern Europe and North America fueled an efflorescence of baroque style in the decorative arts. Characteristic of the baroque style in furniture design are dramatic modulations of form and void, rich and complex patterning, and an ornamental vocabulary of urns, columns, scrolls, and moldings drawn from classical architecture. The dressing table's turned legs and stretchers well illustrate the drama of abrupt transitions of solids and the interplay of form and negative space, as well as the use of architectural motifs such as repeating scrolls for the stretchers, and rich patterns of book-matched and cross-banded walnut veneers on the top and the drawer front.

42 Benno M. Forman, "Furniture for Dressing," in *Winterthur Portfolio* 22:2-3 (1987), 159.

43 Suffolk County Probate Records, Docket 4082. Robert F. Trent, "The Early Baroque in Colonial America: The William and Mary Style," in Ward, ed., *American Furniture,* 65.

23
Dressing Table, 1750-70

Charleston, South Carolina
Mahogany, bald cypress
28 3/4 x 30 3/4 x 18 7/8 inches



MANY EXTRAORDINARY EXAMPLES OF HIGH-STYLE, urbane furniture were produced by craftsmen working in Charleston during the eighteenth century. Advertisements and objects such as this table demonstrate that Charleston cabinetmakers also produced plain furniture characterized by restrained and economical design. In form, this chamber, or dressing, table embodies the eighteenth-century "neat and plain" style, which even affluent planters and merchants such as Peter Manigault of Charleston ordered from England. In 1771 Manigault wrote to his English factor to purchase furniture and silver in London, specifying goods made "the plainer the better so that they are fashionable."[44] The table's well-conceived, simplified design attests to Manigault's sense of the enduring appeal of furniture which is neat and plain.

Although refined in form and lacking superfluous ornament, the table was neatly made of the dense, rich mahogany which Charleston's craftsmen favored. The top is molded on three sides with cyma and ovolo profiles and the rails are relieved with flat arches. The neatly turned legs taper to slender ankles with "round toes" on disks. Above, the leg extensions are ovolo-beaded and the drawer front is also scratch-beaded. The two-board top is butt jointed and glued, and this joint is further secured on the underside with two dovetail keys. The rear of the lower front drawer blade is also neatly chamfered. This example and a nearly identical one probably originated in the same Charleston cabinet-making shop, and both share histories of ownership in that city. Although neither the original owner nor maker of this example are known, a nineteenth-century pencil inscription on the outer left drawer side, "Mrs. Dotterer 51 King [Street]," documents a later Charleston owner.[45]

44 Quoted in Ronald L. Hurst and Jonathan Prown, *Southern Furniture: The Colonial Williamsburg Collection,* (Williamsburg: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1997), 284.

45 The related table is illustrated in E. Milby Burton, *Charleston Furniture, 1700-1825,* (Charleston: The Charleston Museum, 1955), fig.93. A closely related table is in the collection of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. See Hurst and Prown, *Southern Furniture,* cat. 83, 282-4.

24
Dressing Table, 1760-80

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Black walnut, yellow-poplar, pine
30 1/2 x 35 x 21 1/2 inches



ACCORDING TO THE 1772 PRICE LIST, a dressing table of this form was the table made "to suit" a "chest on frame." Although the matching chest on frame or high chest is not known, it would likely have had a scrolled pediment, quarter columns, and "Claw feet & leaves on the knees & shell drawer in the frame," which would have cost £15 when made of walnut. A walnut high chest of this description with a nearly identical shell drawer and skirt profile is further ornamented with applied rococo carving in the scrollboard, which would have increased the cost. Dressing tables were typically priced at about one-third the cost of a high chest, or about £5. The use of walnut instead of mahogany for this dressing table may have been an economy or the client's preference, since the maker selected figured walnut for the uncarved drawer fronts. Both walnut and mahogany were used concurrently in the second half of the eighteenth century and an identical dressing table made of mahogany is known. This dressing table has a traditional history of descent in the family of Hannah Bonsall, and could have been made for one of two Philadelphians of that name who married in the early 1760s.[46]

The carving on this dressing table as well as on the mahogany example is attributed to the shop of Nicholas Bernard (d.1789) and Martin Jugiez (d.1815), immigrant carvers who worked in partnership in Philadelphia from 1762 to about 1783. In both examples, the use of deeply veined acanthus foliage on the knees and a four-point star punch to relieve the ground of the knees and the shell drawer is consistent with carving techniques attributed to that partnership.[47] Like gilding, upholstery, and other trades related to furniture making, carving was a distinct craft employing artisans with specialized skills and tools. In the interest of fashion and efficiency, joiners and cabinetmakers like Thomas Affleck and Benjamin Randolph either employed carvers in their shops or subcontracted all but the most rudimentary work to carving shops. Bills and account book references demonstrate the role of carvers like Bernard and Jugiez and others in creating rococo interiors in the late 1760s. Most of the carving which can be associated with Bernard and Jugiez is architectural and has formed the basis for furniture carving assigned to this shop.[48]

46 The high chest in the Philadelphia Museum of Art is illustrated in Marian S. Carson, "Philadelphia Chippendale at its Best in the Collections of the Philadelphia Museum," in *American Collector* XVI, no. 11, (1947), 11. A closely related walnut dressing table which is probably a contemporary but plain version with identical skirt profiles and drawer configuration is no. 732 in *American Antiques from Israel Sack Collection,* volume 2, (New York: Highland House Publishers, Inc., 1969), 300. The identical mahogany dressing table is fig. 19 in Luke Beckerdite, "Philadelphia carving shops, Part II: Bernard and Jugiez," in *The Magazine Antiques* CXXVIII, no. 3 (1985), 507. Hannah Gamble married Nathaniel Bonsall in April 1762 and Hannah Gleave married Edward Bonsall (1738/9-1826) in 1763.

47 Luke Beckerdite, Bernard and Jugiez," 498-513.

48 Beatrice L. Garvan, "Benjamin Randolph," in *Philadelphia: Three Centuries of American Art,* (Philadelphia: The Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1976), 110-1.

25
Dressing Table, 1760-80

Newport, Rhode Island
Mahogany, chestnut, pine
29 1/2 x 36 x 21 1/8 inches



NEWPORT DRESSING TABLES IN THE QUEEN ANNE STYLE with ogee-shaped skirts and concave carved shells were made by 1746, as a slipper foot version made by Job Townsend for Samuel Ward indicates. By the late 1750s or 1760s, dressing tables with carved shells were also made with turned "round" feet or a combination of claw-and-ball feet at the front and round feet at the back. Although their dimensions vary, these later dressing tables tend to be broad and deep and, like bureau tables and chests of drawers made in Newport, have integrated, architectural tops. The top of this dressing table consists of a thin mahogany board with an ogee-molded edge which is visually joined to the case with a cavetto-and-astragal molding beneath. The case front and sides are veneered with figured mahogany, which presents a sleek, polished surface. This crisp architectural form is relieved by the linear rhythms of the repeating ogee curves of the skirts, the cabriole legs, and the boldly modeled concave shell. Only nineteen Newport dressing tables have survived, about half the number of comparable mahogany high chests of drawers. At the same time, the abundance of block-and-shell carved bureau tables (see Cat. 27) may indicate a regional preference for that form in place of dressing tables made to accompany high chests or chests-on-chests.[49]

Family tradition states that this chest was made for George Washington Rogers (1789-1832), who in 1815 married Anna Maria Perry (1797-1856), a sister of Oliver Hazard Perry (1785-1819), although Rogers would more likely have been a subsequent owner. A chalk inscription on a drawer bottom provides further information about the chest's later history, as it was "bought at the sale of Mrs. O H Perry/ Parade 185-/ by Mrs. Castoff." Mrs. Oliver Hazard Perry (1791-1858), widow of the naval hero, lived in a mid-eighteenth-century house located on the Parade in Newport from 1818 until her death. The purchaser, Mrs. Castoff, may be one of two women by that name who ran a boarding house nearby at 12 Ann Street in the late 1850s. Although certainly out of fashion nearly a century after its manufacture, the table was evidently still serviceable as furniture for dressing and storage.

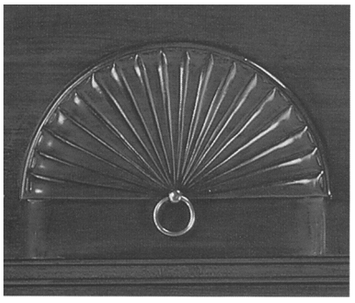
49 Richards and Evans, *New England Furniture,* 343.

26
High Chest of Drawers, 1765-85

Springfield, Massachusetts, area
Black cherry, pine
85 3/4 *(without finial)*
x 42 1/2 *x* 21 1/2 *inches*



HIGH CHESTS OF DRAWERS, ALTERNATELY DESCRIBED as cases of drawers, were often made with a dressing table to suit as an ensemble to store clothing, linens, and articles for grooming and dressing. The high chest form originated in London cabinet shops in the late seventeenth century and usually consisted of an upper case of five or more drawers mounted on a frame base, which often had one or more drawers, supported by turned legs and stretchers. In England this form was replaced in the early eighteenth century by bureaus and chests on chests, but in New England and the mid-Atlantic colonies, the high chest form continued to be made and ornamented according to changing fashions. This example features a scrolled pediment, carved cabriole legs, and the most typical New England drawer configuration used from the 1730s through the 1790s.



Detail of upper shell-carved drawer

Like much of the case furniture made in the Connecticut Valley of western Massachusetts in the mid-eighteenth century, this example relates in form and proportion to Boston-made furniture of the late baroque or Queen Anne style brought to the region by immigrant craftsmen and trade. This chest's distinctive ornamentation of trailing foliage is a regional ornamental style today called "vine carving;" at least ten vine-carved high chests, desks and bookcases, and a chest on chest are known. The style may well have originated with the joiner Eliakim Smith (1735-1775), who worked in Hadley, Massachusetts, from about 1757 until his death. A high chest attributed to Eliakim Smith is now in the collection of Historic Deerfield. In fact, the low-relief, scrolling vine motif is itself deeply rooted in a larger regional design vocabulary which was used to ornament architecture and gravestones as well as furniture. Close parallels are found in the monumental doorways of pretentious houses built in the mid-eighteenth century by the elites called "River Gods," which often feature foliate-carved pilasters or capitals, projecting plinths and scrolled pediments. Another parallel is in the carving style of the Valley's stone cutters. The Smith-type vine carving, for example, is nearly identical to the meandering pattern of fluted, three-lobed leaves found on the gravestone made for Mehetable Smith, Eliakim's wife, who died in 1770.[50]

The existence of variant types of vine carving on furniture made or owned in towns like Springfield, Northampton, and Whately in Massachusetts and South Windsor, Middletown and Suffield in Connecticut, where this high chest was once owned, suggests that more than one shop was active in producing furniture to suit this regional taste in the latter half of the century. Smith trained two or more apprentices in the 1760s whose furniture would likely relate to their master's, and competitors could also have imitated a popular vine motif. This example relates most closely in design and construction to a group of objects which share distinctive drawer construction. The drawer sides are made with 3/8-inch boards neatly beaded on the top edge, the dovetails joining the fronts and sides are neatly cut with narrow-necked pins, and the dovetails of the drawer sides extend beyond the drawer backs to form stops. These details of drawer construction are distinctly different from those in the high chest attributed to Smith, but they may aid in identifying the shops responsible for this and several related chests and desks.

50 The high chest attributed to Eliakim Smith is illustrated in Philip Zea, "Diversity and Regionalism in Rural New England Furniture," in Luke Beckerdite and William N. Hosley, eds., *American Furniture*, (Milwaukee: The Chipstone Foundation, 1995), fig. 35; see William N. Hosley, "Regional Furniture/Regional Life," *Ibid.*, 18-21; see also Kevin M. Sweeney, "Gravestones," and cat. 340, in *The Great River*, 485-91, 505.

27
Bureau Table, 1765-90

Newport, Rhode Island
Mahogany, chestnut, maple, pine
33 1/4 x 36 3/4 x 21 inches

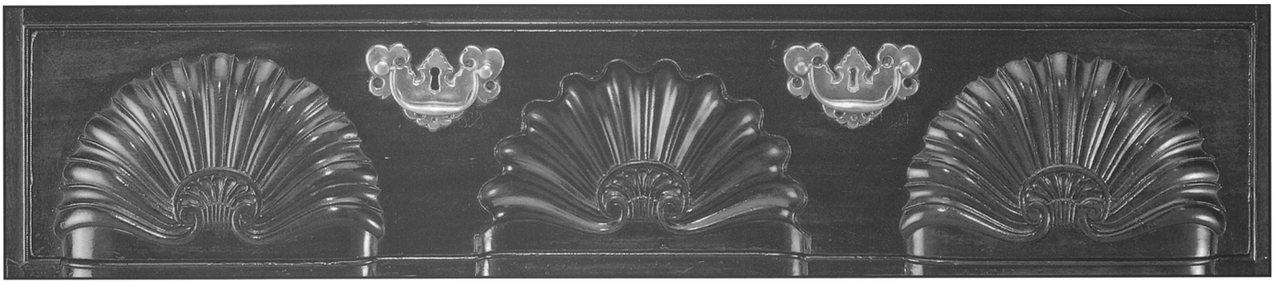


SINCE THE 1920S, RHODE ISLAND FURNITURE whose facades are ornamented with raised and recessed blocking topped by carved shells has been ascribed to members of two prominent cabinetmaking families in Newport, the Townsends and the Goddards. Block-and-shell case furniture was probably first made in Newport about 1760. This date coincides with the town's increasing population, expanding mercantile interests and economic prosperity, and the maturation of the second generation of cabinetmakers trained in the Townsend family shops. Cabinetmakers in this generation include Job, Jr., Edmund, and Thomas, and John, Jonathan, and Christopher, Jr., six sons trained by the brothers Job (1699-1765) and Christopher (1701-1787) Townsend and John (1723-1785) and James (1727-1757) Goddard, brothers who apprenticed with Job Townsend and later married two of his daughters.

The precise origins of the Newport block-and-shell style are uncertain, although numerous precedents exist in baroque furniture made in New England in the 1730s and 1740s. Blocking was used in Boston by the late 1730s, and concave shells with the distinctive ogee-shaped lower lobes appeared in Newport furniture by about 1740. Newport desk interiors also employed a vocabulary of blocked and recessed drawers topped with concave shells probably by the 1740s, although the earliest dated example is a desk made in 1753 by Jonathan Swett (w.1753-1774). The block-and-shell facades may simply be an extension of the desk interior of the 1750s, considering that the form now thought to represent the earliest furniture known with a block-and-shell carved facade is a small desk box or document cabinet signed by John Townsend.[51] Whoever originated the block-and-shell style, it proved to be a particularly popular and flexible design which was applied to desks, tall clocks, chests of drawers, and bureau tables, like this example. Newport's close-knit community of craftsmen and patrons, often linked by marriage, religion, trade, and business interests, may have created an environment which favored the perfection and consistency of form over innovation.[52] The block-and-shell motif remained the predominant design of most "costly and ornamental" furniture made in Newport for three or more decades and inspired imitation by cabinetmakers elsewhere in Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York.

The overall design and shell carving on this example is nearly identical to two bureau tables labeled by Edmund Townsend (1736-1810), although they differ somewhat in construction. The ogee bracket feet on this example are replaced, eliminating one comparative characteristic, and the top is joined in a distinctly different manner. The one-piece mahogany top is rabbeted to receive a sliding half dovetail worked in the extension of the case sides and was further secured with nails and glue blocks to front and rear rails dovetailed to the case sides.[53] Nonetheless, variations in construction even within a single cabinetmaking shop may not be entirely surprising, considering the number of craftsmen working in the block-and-shell tradition over the thirty-year span of its production. In 1774, for example, at least four shops run by mature Townsends and Goddards capable of producing furniture in that style employed an additional seven apprentices and possibly more journeymen and laborers.[54] In general, scholarship on Newport furniture has failed to produce a more comprehensive picture of the cabinetmaking craft and business by addressing Newport's local and regional economy, shop organization, and labor. Questions concerning the roles of journeymen and apprentices and the dozens of joiners and cabinetmakers outside the Townsend and Goddard lineage need to be addressed before criteria for attributions of objects to specific shops or master craftsmen can be considered wholly reliable.

The bureau table was another specialized furniture form intended for dressing and, as the term "bureau" suggests, the design is French in origin, first appearing in the late seventeenth-century at the court of Louis XIV. The bureau table consists of a work surface mounted above ranks of drawers with a central opening to accommodate the sitter. Cabinetmakers advertisements demonstrate that the form was made in England by the 1720s, and probably not long after in the American colonies. A "Buro Table" was one of the furnishings in Pryam Blowers "easterly Bedchamber" in Boston in 1739.[55] The mid-eighteenth century designs published by Thomas Chippendale and the partnership of William Ince and John Mayhew include "bureau dressing tables" with fitted dressing compartments and fold-away dressing glasses, although only a few American-made tables are fitted with either a baize-covered writing slide or a writing desk in the upper long drawer. In America the bureau table was used primarily in bed chambers, rooms often used for light work such as reading and correspondence. The block-front bureau tables made in New England are the best known regional variants, although cabinetmakers in the mid-Atlantic region and the South also produced their own versions of the form in walnut and mahogany, "with or without carved work."[56]



Detail of shell-carved drawer

51 Morrison H. Heckscher, "John Townsend's block-and-shell furniture," in *The Magazine Antiques*, CXXI, no. 5 (1982), 1144-45.

52 Margaretta M. Lovell, "'Such Furniture as Will Be Most Profitable:' the Business of Cabinetmaking in Eighteenth-Century Newport," in *Winterthur Portfolio* 26 (1991), 27-62.

53 The front and rear rails under the top bear two partially legible pencil inscriptions: "John [Tanner?] £9" and "Molly," which were discovered by Alan Miller in 1993. Although deliberate, they differ from a typical Newport cabinetmaker's signature in that they were not visible once the top was attached. Other possible interpretations are that the signature represents the purchaser of the bureau, shipping instructions, or another shop notation rather than a signature of authorship.

54 Lovell, "Business of Cabinetmaking" 50. Shop figures are derived from *Ibid.*, John R. Bartlett, ed. *Census of the Inhabitants of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations 1774*, (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1969), 1-37.

55 Perhaps the earliest known American bureau table is a Connecticut chest at Winterthur, illustrated in Richards and Evans, *American Furniture*, 384-5. Nancy A. Goyne, "The Bureau Table in America," in *Winterthur Portfolio* 3 (1967), 26.

56 Gerard Hopkins, a Baltimore cabinetmaker, advertised that form in 1767. Quoted in Goyne, "Bureau Table," 27.

28
Chest on Chest, 1765-75

Jonathan Shoemaker, 1726-1793
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Black walnut, yellow-poplar, Atlantic white cedar
97 x 44 x 23 inches





Detail of shell-carved drawer

THIS WELL-DOCUMENTED CHEST OF DRAWERS provides a rare insight into one cabinetmaking shop in Philadelphia in the third-quarter of the eighteenth century. The lower case bears the signature of the accomplished, native-born Philadelphia cabinetmaker, Jonathan Shoemaker (1726-1793). A virtual blueprint for the chest also exists in a book of furniture designs drawn by Samuel Mickle (1746-1803), an apprentice in Shoemaker's shop. A third-generation woodworker in Philadelphia, Jonathan Shoemaker was active as a cabinetmaker by 1750 and purchased his own shop in Second Street in 1752. About 1760 he took as an apprentice Samuel Mickle, who continued to work with Shoemaker as a journeyman from 1767 until 1776.[57] Mickle signed and dated the drawings in April 1766, indicating that they were made near the end of his apprenticeship. Together the chest and the drawings not only demonstrate the range of products made in a given shop and fashions current in Philadelphia in the mid 1760s, but they also provide firm evidence of design instruction and transmission from at least one master to his apprentice.

Mickle's drawings of the chest on chest are particularly exact in the notation of overall dimensions and proportional relationships such as the suitable range of dimensions for graduated drawers. Like the plates in a printed pattern book such as Thomas Chippendale's *Gentlemen's and Cabinetmaker's Director,* the drawings depict both elevations and projections to show the pediment and side of the chests. Several other drawings for a desk and bookcase show a similarly high degree of detail, which suggests that for the most complex case furniture a cabinetmaker was prepared to offer a greater variety of optional embellishments, for example, a fretwork frieze or fluted plinth for the "shield" or finial. Because only plain drawers are depicted in the drawings, the shell-carved drawer with "streamers" or foliage, carved "blazes" or finials, and rosettes are probably the work of a carver to whom Shoemaker subcontracted work as needed. The design of the shell and foliage on the drawer is closely related to a body of other furniture carving, attributed to the carver of a high chest in the Garvan Collection at Yale and a number of clock cases.

Chests on chests were sometimes called double chests in Philadelphia and, like the high chest of drawers, were often made en suite with other case furniture. In 1785, for example, Andrew Hamilton's south chamber contained a mahogany bedstead, tables, and chairs, and a "Maho^{y} double Chest of Drawers and a dressing table" worth £20.[58] Hamilton's matching table may have resembled the graduated four-drawer chest with ogee-bracket feet termed a "dressing table" in Samuel Mickle's pattern book.

57 The Shoemaker signature and the Mickle drawing are discussed and illustrated in Eleanor H. Gustafson, ed.,"Collectors' notes," *The Magazine Antiques,* XXVII, no. 5 (1985), 1172-3. The Mickle drawing book is in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. See *Philadelphia: Three Centuries of American Art,* 87-8.

58 Andrew Hamilton Will, 1785:59, City and County of Philadelphia, Wills and Administrations, microfilm copy in Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Museum Library.

29

Desk, 1750-60

John Goddard, 1723-1785

Newport, Rhode Island

Mahogany, white pine, cedar

42 x 39 1/2 x 22 inches

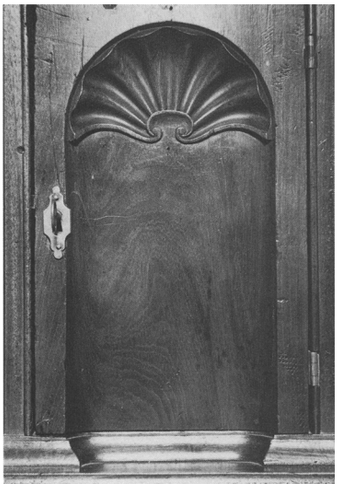


THIS DESK IS INSCRIBED ON THE INSIDE of the prospect door: "Made by /John Goddard/ in Newport Rhode Isle" and is one of only three pieces of furniture–all desks–bearing the signature of this Newport cabinetmaker.[59] The earliest of the three desks was made in 1745, the same year John was made a freeman. Although undated, the present desk was probably made about the same time as the third example, which is dated 1754. Not surprisingly, all three desks strongly resemble a desk and bookcase labeled by Job Townsend (1699-1765), the leading cabinetmaker in Newport with whom John Goddard served an apprenticeship. In 1746 Goddard married his master's daughter, Hannah Townsend (1726-1804), which forged another link between these two families who dominated furniture making in Newport in the second half of the eighteenth century.

Rhode Island cabinetmakers made great quantities of mahogany and maple desks and other case furniture for sale locally and for export to coastal and foreign markets. Desks for export were probably often plain—an "iconographic" form with a limited number of standard features such as a hinged writing surface, an interior compartment fitted with a few small drawers and partitions and usually three or four long drawers below. The 1745 desk, which descended in the Morton family of Nova Scotia, is just such a form, probably representative of the less expensive desks which Newport's cabinetmakers made for sale in distant markets. Labels with signatures seem more logical on objects made for sale in non-local markets, however, the distinctive carved bird's head with inlaid ivory eyes on the lopers are surprising extras to find on a desk made on speculation. This desk, like most others made in Newport, has a straight facade without blocking, a treatment which was reserved for just a few desks and desks and bookcases. Inside, the recessed shell-topped drawers and prospect, the shaped partitions with blocked drawers below, and valance drawers with concave fronts are characteristic of many Newport desks. In addition, a sliding board in the interior permits access to the top drawer and evidence remains of a wooden bolt lock inside that drawer.

59 The ink inscription permeated a paper label which was formerly attached to the inside of the prospect door. Formerly in the collection of Reginald M. Lewis, the desk was published and the inscription discussed in *The Magazine Antiques*, CXXV, no.5 (1984), 1148-9.

Detail of prospect door



30
Desk, 1765-75

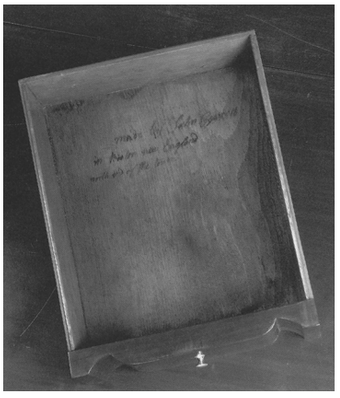
John Cogswell, 1738-1819
Boston, Massachusetts
Mahogany, pine, cedar
44 1/2 x 45 1/4 x 25 inches



THIS DESK'S FIRST OWNER WAS GEORGE HOPSON (D.1803), a prosperous New York City butcher. The maker penned this inscription on an interior desk drawer bottom: "Made by John Cogswell/In Boston new England/ north end of the town." Cogswell evidently designed the desk to Hopson's specifications, as this novel form conflates features of a conventional block-front desk with a falling lid and other features clearly adapted from that of a bureau table (Cat. 27): two banks of short drawers, a cupboard door here flush-mounted, and above the door a concealed, spandrel document drawer, with many other "extras" intended to embellish an already special object.

In the eighteenth century, desks were made in great quantities by cabinetmakers throughout the colonies for sale locally and for export to coastal and foreign markets. Sometimes called escrutoires or scrutoires from the French *escritoire*, or simply, desks, by about 1720 this form included such standard features as a hinged writing surface which conceals and often locks an interior compartment fitted with small drawers and partitions as well as three or four long drawers below. Curiously, the desk is also a highly adaptable form of case furniture, frequently personalized with unconventional features and often fitted with concealed interior compartments. In addition to the novel treatment of the cupboard door and drawers, this desk's interior contains a complex assortment of counterfeit and clandestine compartments. The prospect box withdraws only after removing the valance drawer, which is locked with a wooden spring. The pilasters on either side of the prospect door are sham, but contain narrow drawers which are accessible from the rear of the removable box. In all, the desk provides twenty-seven locked and concealed drawers, partitioned openings, and compartments, a dramatic embodiment of eighteenth-century concern for discrete order and the client's desire for security, since desks were often also used to store cash, jewelry, and other small valuables.

Born in Ipswich, Massachusetts in 1738, John Cogswell probably began an apprenticeship in the early 1750s with a member of the Gooding family, an established family of cabinetmakers working in Charlestown, Boston, and Cambridge in the eighteenth century. Cogswell came to Boston in 1760 following his apprenticeship and was working as an independent artisan by 1762 when he married Abigail Gooding; by 1767 he worked in a shop on Middle Street in Boston's North End. Judging from his documented and attributed works, Cogswell was one of the most innovative furniture makers in Revolutionary-era Boston. The well-known chest on chest signed by John Cogswell and dated 1782, probably made for the Salem merchant Elias Haskett Derby, demonstrates his skills of design and execution, updating the baroque bombé form with fretwork friezes, sculptural carving, and lustrous woods. For this desk, probably made about 1770, Cogswell devised a novel form which he constructed of high quality mahogany with many extras of workmanship and materials such as heavy blocking, expansive carved knee brackets and central pendant ornament, and large brass escutcheons. The four boldly curved cabriole legs end in round feet enriched with veining, on substantial, rounded disks.[60] Over his long career, Cogswell probably subcontracted carved work to a number of different specialists; the flat, low-relief carving and the composition of the scrolling acanthus foliage with extensive veining and the punched ground are familiar elements of carved knee brackets and pendants on Boston furniture made from the 1760s through the 1780s.[61]



Inscription in interior desk drawer

60 Veining is more often seen on Boston-area chairs, although a turret-end card table formerly in a St. Louis collection with veined pad feet on the rear legs is illustrated in a Leigh Keno American Antiques advertisement, *The Magazine Antiques*, CXLIII, no.5 (1993), 649. Veined pad feet with thick rounded disks also appear on a Chippendale chair attributed to Boston or Salem in the collection of the Peabody-Essex Museum, illustrated in Jobe and Kaye, *New England Furniture*, fig. 114a.

61 A strongly similar composition of acanthus foliage appears on the ambitiously scaled bombé pulpit which the carver William Burbeck may have executed for Boston's Brattle Square Church in 1772-3. For a full discussion of Burbeck, the pulpit, and John Cogswell, see Robert Mussey and Anne Rogers Haley, "John Cogswell and Boston Bombé Furniture: Thirty-Five Years of Revolution in Politics and Design," in Luke Beckerdite, ed., *American Furniture*, (Milwaukee: The Chipstone Foundation, 1994), 73-105.



31
Desk and Bookcase, 1765-90

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Mahogany, black cherry, yellow-poplar, Atlantic white cedar, pine
100 3/4 x 45 1/2 x 24 1/4 inches



Detail of pediment

THIS DESK AND BOOKCASE DEMONSTRATES the Philadelphia cabinetmaker's full repertoire of attributes and optional extras then in fashion according to the 1772 price list. The desk compares most closely to the winged, or fall-front, desk with a prospect, and swelled bracket feet, priced at £11 when made of mahogany. The customer probably paid extra for the column drawers, here faced with leather false book spines, two rows of small drawers, and partitions with scalloped valances. The bookcase section includes many more extras including the fretwork frieze, scrolled dentil cornice, pierced scroll board and carved finial or "shield," which in total probably cost at least £13, among the most expensive case furniture. Thus, the cost of the desk and bookcase together represented a sizeable investment for its first owner.

This example is one of at least six Philadelphia desks and bookcases and chests on chests closely related in form which may represent the work of a single shop that produced high quality cabinetwork, probably in the decade before or just after the Revolution.[62] All feature highly figured mahogany enriched with select passages of carving, a combination which is used to great effect. Most of the related chests and desks employ fretwork friezes, scrolled dentil pediments with richly carved rosettes, pierced scrollboards, and carved finials. The scrollboard on this example, the most elaborate of the group, is a particularly complex composition of rococo-style foliate C scrolls. The shop clearly employed one or more skilled carvers since the original finials used in this group include busts of the poet John Milton, a basket of flowers, and on this example and another desk and bookcase, a gadrooned urn with flowers and pendant foliage. Finials of these types appear atop desks and library bookcases in Chippendale's *Gentlemen's and Cabinetmaker's Director* and frequent references in this group of case furniture probably indicate a craftsman selectively mining that pattern book for appropriate ornamental details.

62 Alan Miller has identified this group of closely related case furniture that includes desks and bookcases in the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum (accession 56.103); one formerly owned by the dealer Philip Bradley, Decorative Arts Photograph Collection (DAPC), accession 67.313, Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum. The chests on chests are in the Bayou Bend Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, illustrated in David B. Warren, *Bayou Bend, American Furniture, Paintings, and Silver from the Bayou Bend Collection* (Houston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1975), cat. 131; and another illustrated in Luke Vincent Lockwood, *Colonial Furniture in America*, 2 volumes (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1926), 1:127.

32
Tall Case Clock, 1765-80

Works by Jacob Godshalk,
(c.1735-1782)
Case: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Black walnut, pine, brass, steel, glass
101 1/2 x 22 3/8 x 12 1/2 *inches*





Detail of scrollboard carving

LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT JACOB GODSHALK before he moved to Philadelphia in the early 1760s. He was likely active as a clockmaker for several years in Towamencin, near Philadelphia, since numerous clocks inscribed "Jacob Godshalk/Towamencin" are known. About 1763 or 1764 Godshalk relocated his business to the city; thereafter his clocks are inscribed with his new shop location. In 1770 Godshalk married Elizabeth Owen and in 1773 took as an apprentice her son Griffith Owen. Godshalk's signed Philadelphia clocks must predate his death in October 1781, although he was possibly still active in that year since he received payment for repairing the State House clock.[63] Godshalk made high quality eight-day clocks and thirty hour movements with engraved brass dials trimmed with cast spandrel ornaments of several patterns or engraved and silvered dials.

Godshalk evidently sold his clocks to a number of different craftsmen since the cases housing his works are widely varied in style, choice of woods, and degrees of ornamentation. Other Godshalk clocks are housed in less elaborate walnut and maple cases; one with a rococo-style ornamented dial has a plain walnut case with maple inlays of the date 1775 and the initials "PP." Several clocks by Godshalk and other Philadelphia clockmakers are housed in cases with rococo-style carving attributed to a highly skilled carver known for his work on a high chest in the Garvan collection at Yale. A nearly identical tall clock case executed in mahogany features a similar composition of applied C scrolls with rocaille ornament and scrolling foliage in its scrollboard.[64] This clock comprises most of the available options itemized in the 1772 price list, including a scrolled pediment head, quarter columns in the corners, and carved rosettes, as well as applied rococo-style carving in the tympanum; the case alone probably cost at least £7 or £8 when made of walnut. Extras such as the scrollboard carving and the highly figured walnut boards selected for the arched pendulum case door and the book-matched molded-edge panel with molded corners would have increased that sum. A "Clock & walnut case" was the most valuable possession in Warwick Coats's north parlor or dining room in Philadelphia in 1782. The clock cost £18, three times more than the six "open back" claw and shell carved chairs, and more than either a large looking glass or a desk.

63 Edwin A. Battison and Patricia E. Kane, *The American Clock, 1725-1865, the Mabel Brady Garvan Collection and Other Collections at Yale,* (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1973), 118.

64 Heckscher, *American Furniture,* cat. 199. Warwick Coats Will, 1782: 82, Philadelphia County Wills and Administrations.

33
Tall Clock, 1785-1795

Works by Caleb Wheaton, 1757-1827
Providence, Rhode Island
Case: Rhode Island, probably Newport
Mahogany, pine, brass, iron, glass
94 1/2 *x* 20 3/4 *x* 10 1/2 *inches*



ALTHOUGH ONLY TWO ARE LABELED by Newport cabinetmakers, clock cases with blocked shell doors and works by clockmakers in Rhode Island and elsewhere are often attributed to the Townsend and Goddard cabinetmakers of Newport.[65] Frequently cited in support of attributions to the cabinetmaker John Goddard is a receipt of payment of £1.16.0 L[awful] M[oney] received by Caleb Wheaton from Zebulon Utter on behalf of Townsend Goddard, dated March 27, 1786, shortly after the death of his father John in 1785. The transaction which this document records has been repeatedly misinterpreted since 1933 when it was first published with a Caleb Wheaton mahogany tall case clock which it reportedly accompanied. In fact, the receipt confirms Townsend Goddard's purchase of two clock cases from Wheaton.[66] Clocks by the prolific Providence clockmaker Caleb Wheaton (working c.1784-1824) often are housed in cases like this one with broken scroll pediments, outer finials supported on architectural plinths, a block-and-shell carved door, quarter columns in the pendulum case with occasionally astragal-and-fillet molded returns above or below, and a base with canted corners. This example also features oval lights in the bonnet. In its design and construction this case is consistent with Newport examples, although documents such as the Wheaton-Goddard receipt suggest that further research on the collaborative contributions of Providence clockmakers and cabinetmakers to a Rhode Island regional style, particularly after the Revolution, would prove fruitful.

Caleb Wheaton made clocks with engraved brass and silvered dials, although at the time this clock was made, white-painted dials were probably the latest fashion. The iron falseplate on the reverse of the dial bears a cast mark of Osborne's Manufactory, Birmingham, England, in operation from 1777 until 1817. The proprietor Thomas H. Osborne (d.1779) and his successors as well as his competitors produced "japanned" or white-painted dials in several sizes and with a variety of ornaments, such as the"Landscape...in [the] Arch" seen in this example.[67] Tall clocks are today valued primarily for the workmanship of their cases, but in the eighteenth century the timepiece itself held greater significance. Appraisers in Rhode Island usually recorded "eight day clocks," such as this example, in such formal, public spaces as keeping rooms, parlors, and dining rooms, and eight day clocks consistently rank among the four most highly valued objects inventoried in Newport estates. Philip Wanton, a Newport merchant who died in 1781, owned "1 Eight Day Clock & Case £ 8.0.0 [Lawful Money]," and Captain Aaron Sheffield, who died in November 1796, owned an eight day clock valued at £ 7.10.0 in his dining room.[68]

65 The best known example is a mahogany block-and-shell case labeled by John Townsend (1732-1809) and dated 1789; a plain mahogany case with works warranted and dated December 30, 1772 by Thomas Claggett (c.1730-1797) is labeled by the cabinetmaker Benjamin Baker (1737-1822) . Another John Townsend clock dated 1783 is unlocated. The 1789 Townsend clock is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. See Heckscher, *American Furniture*, cat. 192. The Claggett-Baker clock is in the collection of Old Sturbridge Village. See Philip Zea and Robert C. Cheney, *Clockmaking in New England, 1725-1825, an Interpretation of the Old Sturbridge Village Collection,* (Sturbridge, Mass.: Old Sturbridge Village, 1992), 81, 163.

66 *The Magazine Antiques,* XXIV, no. 1 (1933), 2-4. Although £1.16.0 is surprisingly little for tall clock cases, the sum is rendered in Rhode Island's adjusted Lawful Money. In 1763 the colony's Lawful Money was reset at £1 to more than £23 Old Tenor, and in 1763 at £26. Some craftsmen, such as Job Townsend, Jr., continued to keep accounts in Old Tenor into the 1770s. Expressed in the inflated Old Tenor of the 1760s, the two clock cases may have cost about £50. John J. McCusker, *Money and Exchange in Europe and America, 1600-1775: A Handbook,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1978), 135-7.

67 Quoted in Brian Loomes, *Painted Dial Clocks*, (Woodbridge, UK: Antique Collectors Club, 1994), 120.

68 Garrett, 107. "Newport Interiors," Newport County Probate Records, Estate of Philip Wanton, Book I:25-6; Estate of Aaron Sheffield, Book IV:22.

34
Looking Glass, 1765-73

Labeled by Stephen Whiting
1720-1789
Boston, Massachusetts, or possibly England
Walnut, pine, mirrored glass, gilding
34 1/2 x 17 1/2 x 1 inches



THIS LOOKING GLASS BEARS A HANDWRITTEN paper label advertising "a [quan]tity of Pictures and Looking Glasses sold by Step[n] Whiting Opposite the Corn Field in Union Street Boston." Stephen Whiting served an apprenticeship with the Boston japanner and gilder Robert Davis (d.1739). Whiting's advertisements as "Glassman and Jappanner" in Boston newspapers between 1743 and 1773 chronicle his retail and manufacturing ventures over a thirty-year career. He sold "large and small Sconce and Pier Looking Glasses in any sort of Frames," and also developed a specialty in window glass and glass tablewares. Whiting also framed and sold "Maps, Prospects, and Metzotinto prints," and worked as a gilder of picture frames, including rococo-style picture frames carved by John Welch (1711-1789) for the painter John Singleton Copley (1738-1815).

Whiting is also notable for manufacturing looking glasses beginning in the 1750s, probably using English glass plate which he imported and quick-silvered in his shop. Whiting faced serious competition in Boston from retailers of less expensive English looking glasses and was declared bankrupt in 1758, although he continued in business. After the signing of Non-Importation Agreements in 1765, Whiting invoked the anti-British sentiments of readers of *The Boston News-Letter* as an American manufacturer deserving of their business. In 1767, writing as one "who had done more...towards manufacturing Looking-Glasses than anyone in the Province, or perhaps the Continent," he appealed for "[e]ncouragement enough to think it worthwhile to live."[69] These advertisements notwithstanding, Whiting's label on this looking glass is not a guarantee of Boston manufacture since numerous English-made looking glasses with nearly identical walnut-veneered frames and carved and gilt shells are known. The glass in this frame is probably original, but it has also likely been replated. Whiting regularly advertised this service and could also have attached his label, datable by the shop address which he used between 1765 and 1773, to the backboards after replating the surface of an imported looking glass which had become non-reflective.[70]

69 George Francis Dow, *The Arts and Crafts in New England,* 1704-1775, (Topsfield, Mass.:The Wayside Press, 1927), 129.

70 David L. Barquist, *American Tables and Looking Glasses in the Mabel Bragy Garvan Collections at Yale University* (New Haven: Yale University Press for the Yale University Art Gallery, 1992), 302, n. 2.

35
Pair of Looking Glasses, 1760-85

Probably England, possibly Massachusetts
Mahogany, spruce, white pine, mirrored glass, gilding
40 1/2 x 22 3/4 x 1 inches

In a 1754 advertisement Philadelphia merchant Charles Willing offered for sale looking glasses and pier glasses in a variety of sizes. Although they were frequently hung on architectural piers between windows in a room, the term pier glass was more commonly a connotation of size rather than placement. Glasses which, like these, were larger than 26 by 15 inches, Willing termed pier glasses.[71] The survival of pairs of pier glasses is rare, although their use in the eighteenth century is documented by inventories and bills. This pair, made with opposing phoenixes in the pierced crests, also retains their original gilding and quick-silvered glass. Like most looking glasses used in the colonies, these were likely made in England where the manufacture and export of mirrored glass plate and looking glass frames were already specialized industries by the eighteenth century. The secondary woods used in the frames are spruce and white pine, which are of little help in establishing the origin of these frames. The American and European species of spruce are indistinguishable, and although white pine is an American species, this lumber was widely exported to England for use in the carving and cabinetmaking trades. Several closely related examples with histories in New England are known. Although this pair does not have an early history, the dealer Albert Sack acquired them in Boston and proposed a possible Massachusetts origin on the basis of several similar examples found there.

Overall, these frames ornamented with scrolls and volutes are strongly reminiscent of the Whiting example (Cat. 34), however the use of mahogany, the incised and gilt vines and carved birds in the crests signal the rococo style. The sinuous phoenixes or simply "gilt birds" as they were called in the bills of eighteenth-century carvers, gilders, and looking-glass sellers, commonly inhabit designs for English rococo-style pier glasses to which they impart an exotic, Chinese flavor. Although these birds are a tamer interpretation of their counterparts illustrated in pattern books by designers such as Thomas Chippendale, Matthias Lock, and Thomas Johnson, the reference to their English rococo or chinoiserie precedents were likely understood by the looking glasses' first owners. The carved and gilded birds and foliage also present an excellent foil to the polished mahogany frames and, like the mirrored glass, would have added a lustrous tone in a candlelit interior.

71 Barquist, *Tables and Looking Glasses*, 299.



36
TANKARD, C.1742

Elias Boudinot, 1706-1770
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Silver
7 1/4 x 7 1/2 x 5 1/2 (diameter) inches;
32 oz 9 dwt (1010g)

Marks/inscriptions: *Struck twice on either side of handle at rim: "EB" in oblong reserve with cut corners. Scratch weight on underside:* "32 OZ 18"



THE SILVERSMITH ELIAS BOUDINOT WAS BORN IN NEW YORK to parents of Huguenot ancestry and entered an apprenticeship with a fellow Huguenot, the silversmith Simeon Soumaine, in June 1721. Seven years later, upon completion of his apprenticeship, Boudinot moved to Antigua, where he married Susannah Le Roux, who died in 1733. Returning to the colonies with his second wife, Catherine Williams, Boudinot settled in Philadelphia, where he worked from about 1733 to 1752. In this example, Boudinot conceived and wrought a tankard of generous proportions and bold forms. Its low, tapered body is matched with a boldly shaped S-scroll handle, deeply modeled scroll thumbpiece, shield-shaped terminal, and a domed, stepped lid with a wide flange trimmed with neat ogee scrolls. Next to its robust form the tankard's most striking feature is the engraving, the central motif being the complex interlocking mirror-image cypher "GAO," which signifies George and Anna (Clarke) O'Kill, who married in December 1742. The enclosing shield and baroque-style cartouche or mantling is composed of S and C scrolls of foliage and strapwork and garlands of husks, which is likely the work of a specialist engraver hired by Boudinot to execute his more elaborate compositions.[72]



Detail of engraving

Although descended from base drinking pots of the medieval hall and tavern, tankards made of silver possess a ceremonial aspect and, by the latter half of the seventeenth century, were even used as liturgical vessels for the service of communion wine. Usually made in one-quart, or occasionally two-, three-, or four-quart sizes, tankards are among the largest silver objects commonly owned in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Toward the end of the century the popularity of large communal drinking vessels waned in favor of individuated "canns" or mugs. Nevertheless, tankards continued to play an important traditional role as bearers of engraved coats of arms, monograms, or commemorative inscriptions on their bodies, lids, and handles. Such inscriptions signal their function as emblems or "icons" of family continuity, presentation, gift, or remembrance. Their symbolic function may also account for the durability of the tankard design compared to other wares which changed form more readily in response to stylistic change.[73]

72 Cheryl Robertson, "Elias Boudinot: A Case Study in Ethnic Identity and Assimilation," (unpublished master's thesis, 1980), 16-9.

73 Gerald W. R. Ward, in David Warren, Katherine S. Howe, and Michael K. Brown, *Marks of Achievement: Four Centuries of American Presentation Silver,* (Houston: Museum of Fine Arts, in association with Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1987), 19. Barbara McLean Ward, "The Craftsman in a Changing Society: Boston Goldsmiths, 1690-1730," (Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1983), 261.

37
Tankard, 1740-50

Jacob Hurd, 1703-1758
Boston, Massachusetts
Silver
7 1/4 x 6 3/4 inches x 5 3/4 (diameter) inches; 23 oz 2dwt (719g)

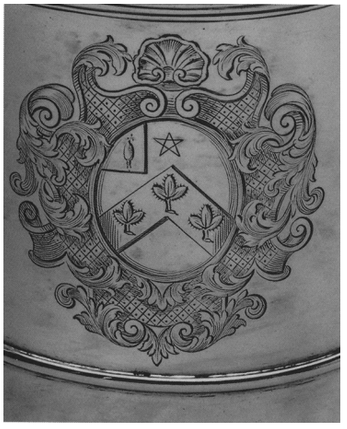
Marks/inscriptions: *"IHURD" in trefoil-shaped reserve, at left of handle and on lid. Scratch weights, underside: "24" and "23"12".*
Below cartouche in cursive: "M.L.I./to/C.R.M.H." On handle in roman letters: "MB"



This tankard form with a molded mid-band and a low domed lid and baluster finial was used by many artisans in Boston and other New England towns throughout the second quarter of the eighteenth century. Its maker, Jacob Hurd, was one of the most prolific goldsmiths in Boston; more than 500 objects bearing Hurd's mark have survived. References in the account book of the silversmith Benjamin Greene show that a large and productive shop like Hurd's made objects and executed specialized tasks such as turning and burnishing for retailers and proprietors of smaller shops like Greene. Hurd probably learned his trade with John Burt, or possibly John Edwards, two of the leading goldsmiths in early eighteenth-century Boston. Hurd himself trained at least seven apprentices, including his two sons Nathaniel and Benjamin, and Daniel Henchman (Cat. 46), who also married Hurd's daughter Elizabeth in 1753.[74]

The baroque-style cartouche engraved on this tankard—composed of rich, three-dimensional foliage, scrolls, and shells on a diapered ground—is the

work of a skilled engraver either working as a journeyman in Hurd's shop or as a subcontractor who engraved a number of elaborate coats of arms for Hurd in the late 1730s and 1740s.[75] Hurd probably owned copies of pattern books such as John Guillim's *Display of Heraldry* (London, 1724) and Samuel Sympson's *Book of Cyphers* (London, 1726) which would provide correct designs of coats of arms and other heraldic devices. Jacob's copies of these volumes may even be those depicted in the portrait of his son Nathaniel (1730-1777), a goldsmith and engraver, painted by John Singleton Copley about 1765. Another element in this tankard's baroque vocabulary, the cast grotesque mask at the handle terminal, appears on another Hurd tankard and several other tankards made by John Burt, Paul Revere, Sr., and William Simpkins, which may signal the participation of a third craftsman in the completion of this tankard.[76]



Detail of engraving of Bromfield arms

The arms on the tankard are those borne by the Bromfield family, prominent merchants in eighteenth-century Boston and frequent patrons of Hurd and other Boston goldsmiths. The Bromfield arms also appear on a salver made by Hurd and on a tankard made by John Potwine (1698-1792) for Edward Bromfield (1695-1756) who, in 1722, married Abigail Coney (1700-1777), daughter of the goldsmith John Coney (1655/6-1722). The tankard's original owner was probably Henry Bromfield (1727-1820), of Boston and Harvard, Massachusetts, or his first wife, Margaret Fayerweather (1732-1761), whom he married in 1749; the initials "M*B" engraved on the handle most likely signify Margaret Bromfield. The tankard probably descended to their son Henry (1751-1837), the only male heir surviving to adulthood. The merchant Henry Bromfield and his wife, Margaret, resided in London and Cheltenham, England, where the tankard was recently purchased at auction.

74 Patricia E. Kane, *Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths and Jewelers,* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1997), 578-651. Kathryn C. Buhler, *American Silver 1655-1825 in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston,* 2 volumes, (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1972), I:357.

75 A cartouche of similar design frames the Pepperell family arms on a Hurd teapot which Patricia Kane has attributed to the shop of Thomas Johnston, a native-born engraver of bookplates and bank bills working in Boston by 1727. Kane, *Massachusetts Silversmiths,* 80-3. Nathaniel Hurd is known primarily as an accomplished engraver and could have trained with a journeyman engraver in his father's shop during his apprenticeship between about 1743 and 1750. Buhler, *American Silver,* 1972, I:354.

76 The use of identical cast elements on silver made by a number of makers suggests a common source. Barbara Ward has proposed John Edwards as the originator of a number of cast handle terminals, including this mask design which was used by Edwards, Jacob Hurd, John Burt, and others. "Boston Goldsmiths," 262. The maker's mark "WS" on this mask terminal also appears on a tankard marked by Paul Revere, Sr., at Winterthur, suggesting William Simpkins (1704-1780) as another possible maker. Ian M.G. Quimby, *American Silver at Winterthur,* (Winterthur, Del: The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1997), 151-2.

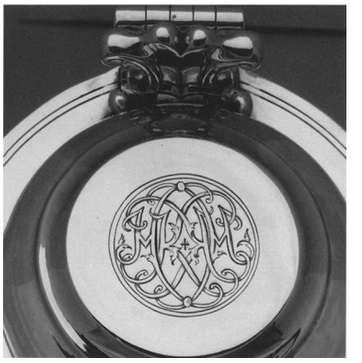
38
Tankard, 1760-70

Myer Myers, 1723-1795
New York, New York
Silver
7 5/8 x 8 1/4 x 5 1/2 (diameter) inches;
39 oz 11 dwt (1231g)

Marks/Inscriptions: *near handle*
"MM" conjoined in oblong reserve.
On lid mirror-image cypher "HK"



THROUGHOUT THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, TANKARD DESIGNS changed little, in keeping with the strongly traditional functional and symbolic uses of this form. Rococo-style tankards made by New York silversmiths retained the low proportions and flat-domed lids of tankards made in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, although applied ornaments and engraved motifs were omitted or updated according to changing fashions. In this example, Myer Myers used a handle composed of an S- and C-scroll and a pierced thumbpiece with an ogee profile top in keeping with the late baroque or rococo styles current in the latter half of the eighteenth century.



Detail of engraved lid

The New York-style flat tankard lid provides a circular surface for engraving and other ornament. Occasionally, early tankards made by New York silversmiths feature silver coins inserted in the lids. One rococo-style tankard marked by Myer Myers, possibly made for the Verplanck family, also has a coin dated 1679 inset in the center of the circular lid. More often, Myers and other makers utilized the center of the circular lid for visually complex foliate cyphers or armorial engraving. Myers often used an asymmetrical foliate cypher, however the mirror-image cypher "HK," signifying this tankard's original owner, is a style of engraving common a generation or more before this tankard was made. The identity of the original owner is unknown, although the tankard traditionally descended in the Beekman family of New York.[77]

While the popularity of communal drinking vessels waned in the late eighteenth century, tankards continued to play symbolic roles. Many silver wares were given as heirlooms, but tankards may have been particularly powerful emblems of wealth and family continuity and are frequently mentioned in wills. In 1776, John van Gelder, a New York gentleman, bequeathed two silver tankards, each perhaps as much as half a century old, to his sons. His elder son Gelian received a silver tankard which had belonged to van Gelder's father and his younger son Gerrit received "another silver tankard which was his grandfather, Onkelbo's."[78]

77 Jeanette W. Rosenbaum, *Myer Myers, Goldsmith, 1723-1795,* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1954), 91, 133. David Stockwell, Inc., advertisement, *The Magazine Antiques,* XCV, no. 2, (1969), 169.

78 "Abstracts of Wills, Liber 30, 1771-6," *New-York Historical Society Collection,* VIII (1899), 323. "Onkelbo" was the silversmith Gerrit Onckelbag (c. 1670-1732).

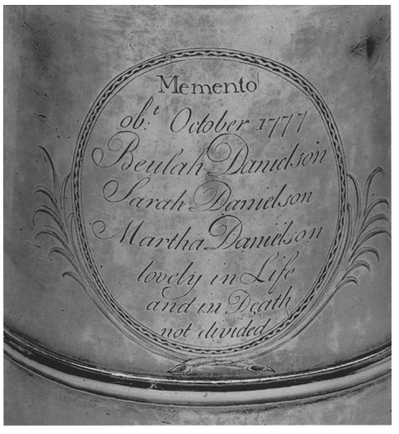
39
TANKARD, C.1783

Paul Revere II, 1735-1818
Boston, Massachusetts
Silver
9 1/4 x 7 x 5(diameter) inches; 31 oz 19 dwt (994g)

Marks/inscriptions: *"REVERE" in oblong reserve near handle*



THE POIGNANT INSCRIPTION ENGRAVED ON this tankard suggests that remembrance was an important aspect of its function. Within an engraved border is inscribed: "MEMENTO / obt. October 1777 / Beulah Danielson / Sarah Danielson / Martha Danielson / lovely in Life / and in Death / not divided." For its first owner, Timothy Danielson (1733-1791), of Brimfield, Massachusetts, this tankard served as a tangible commemoration of a beloved wife and children. Danielson married Beulah Winchester in November 1761 and their only children, daughters Sarah and Martha, were born in 1766 and 1768. At the start of the Revolutionary War, Timothy Danielson was commissioned as a colonel in command of a regiment of Minute-men, and by 1781 he attained the rank of major general. In mid-September 1777, brigadier general Danielson was chosen to command an military expedition and he may have been absent in October when Beulah Danielson and her two children died. If so, Danielson's wartime absence may have heightened the poignancy of the simultaneous deaths of his wife and children which inspired this commemorative silver.[79]



Detail of engraving

Although it memorializes an event which occurred in 1777, the tankard was likely made a few years later. Paul Revere ceased his goldsmithing business in 1775 to serve in the Massachusetts militia. He resumed business about 1780 following his dismissal from the Massachusetts State's Train of Artillery. Timothy Danielson was a member of the Constitutional Convention in 1779 and served terms as a state representative and state senator between 1780 and 1785; he probably ordered the tankard during one of his frequent trips to Boston. According to entries in Paul Revere's daybooks, Danielson conducted business with Revere in 1783. On July 5 Danielson settled a debt of £6.6.3 with Revere, which, if Danielson provided sufficient old silver or coin, may well record the cost of making and engraving this tankard.[80] In form, this example more closely resembles tankards which Revere made following the Revolution. The foliate finial is like that seen on Revere's neoclassical-style fluted teapots and the simplified script and engraved border, appropriate for the somber inscription, may also be early hints of that style, which began to appear in Revere's engraving in about 1770.

In the twentieth century Paul Revere has emerged as probably the best known craftsman of eighteenth-century America. Revere's patriot status guaranteed his place in the American memory as early as the 1860s, when his ride was immortalized by the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. In this century, however, his importance as a prolific and successful silversmith and engraver, entrepreneur, and industrialist has also been recognized. That process has been enabled by the survival of hundreds of silver wares bearing his mark engraved bookplates and prints, and the business records of his goldsmithing business spanning thirty-six years. Revere's father, Paul Revere, Sr. (1702-1754), was born Apollos Rivoire in France and emigrated to Boston from the island of Guernsey in 1716. He entered an apprenticeship with John Coney, one of Boston's leading goldsmiths. Paul Revere, Jr., trained and worked with his father until his death in 1754, at which time he inherited a fully equipped shop and a network of business relationships.[81] The daybooks of his goldsmith's shop reveal the production of more than 5,000 objects between 1761 and 1797. From the beginning, Revere produced a wide variety of flatware and hollowware, particularly objects for dining and drinking, and thousands of small wares. Revere trained at least eight apprentices, including his son Paul III, who began to work in the shop about 1783, a future brother-in-law and a son-in-law, and a nephew Thomas Revere who continued to work in the Revere shop in the 1790s.[82]

79 The cause of their deaths was not recorded, although according to the *Massachusetts Spy,* published in nearby Worcester, Massachusetts, inoculations "for the Small-Pox" were offered in Mendon and Fitchburg in April and October 1777. Either an outbreak of smallpox or the inoculations might have caused their simultaneous deaths.

80 The debt is equivalent to the £6.3.0 which Revere charged in 1795 for making and engraving a nearly identical tankard with a simpler cypher and border. Revere usually priced the metal at 7 shillings per ounce; the cost of 32 ounces of silver for Danielson's tankard would have been about £11.4.0. Buhler, *American Silver,* II: 451. In 1783 Danielson also supplied Revere with an additional 20 crowns, probably for a silver cann weighing 14 ounces 3 pennyweights which Revere charged £3.12.6 labor. Revere Family Papers, *Waste and Memoranda Book, 1761-1783,* Massachusetts Historical Society, 73, 75.

81 Janine E. Skerry, "The Revolutionary Revere, A Critical Assessment of the Silver of Paul Revere," in *Paul Revere–Artisan, Businessman, and Patriot: The Man Behind the Myth,* (Boston: Paul Revere Memorial Association, 1988), 41-7; Deborah A. Federhen, "From Artisan to Entrepreneur, Paul Revere's Silver Shop Operation," in *Ibid.*, 64-76.

82 Kane, *Massachusetts Silversmiths,* 797.

40
Cann, 1760-70

Benjamin Burt, 1729-1805
Boston, Massachusetts
Silver
4 7/8 x 5 1/4 x 3 5/8 (diameter) inches;
8 oz 1 dwt (250g)

Marks/inscriptions: *on underside: "BENJAMIN/BURT" in conforming reserve "S*L / to / E*L" in roman letters on underside*



BENJAMIN BURT PROBABLY BEGAN AN APPRENTICESHIP with his father, the silversmith John Burt (1693-1746), and completed his training about 1750 with his brothers Samuel Burt (1724-1754) and William Burt (1726-1752). Benjamin Burt was a prolific silversmith who made a wide range of hollowware forms including coffeepots, teapots, porringers, sauceboats, tankards, and particularly canns, of which nearly sixty examples are extant. Burt's silver is often ornamented with exuberant passages of rococo engraving and chasing, although his success as a craftsman is also measured by his well-proportioned, bold designs, such as the bulbous shape of this cann's body and the plain but refined execution of its handle's cusped S-and C-scrolls.[83]

In American silver, the term "cann" refers to a mug of baluster form; the S curve which defines the body shape began to appear as a major design motif in American-made objects about 1730 and remained popular until the 1790s when straight-sided neoclassical-style "hooped canns" came into fashion. Mugs or canns, like tankards, are frequently mentioned in wills, suggesting their role in the transfer of wealth, authority, and lineage to subsequent generations. In 1740, for example, Samuel Thaxter of Hingham, Massachusetts, bequeathed each of his four grandsons a silver tankard or mug engraved with his name. To his namesake, Samuel, Thaxter gave his "biggest silver tankard," while his youngest grandson, Benjamin, received his "least." John received "the silver tankard marked with his name that his father used whilst he was alive," and Joseph received his mug.[84]

83 Kane, *Massachusetts Silversmiths*, 224-8.

84 Suffolk County Probate Records, Docket Number 7538.

41
COFFEEPOT, 1755-70

Myer Myers, 1723-1795
New York, New York
Silver, wood
11 5/8 x 7 3/4 x 4 7/8 (diameter) inches; 39 oz 1 dwt gross (1211 g)

Marks/inscriptions: *on underside, "Myers" in cursive in conforming reserve and scratch weight, "39/6 oz"*

COFFEEPOTS OF THIS TAPERED CYLINDRICAL FORM were favored by London goldsmiths as a vehicle for bands of flat and relief, or repoussé, chasing when the rococo style became popular in the late 1730s. Although repoussé chasing is relatively rare in American colonial silver, coffeepots of this form with chased ornament are known by silversmiths in Charleston, Annapolis, Philadelphia, and Lancaster, Pennsylvania. In this example, however, the pot's simple cylindrical form and absence of surface ornamentation of any kind may indicate the patron's preference for plain silver. The scratch weight of 38 ounces 6 pennyweights suggests an initial investment of more than £20 for the metal, exclusive of labor; perhaps Myers's client chose instead to invest his money in the value of silver rather than the labor required to produce elaborate chased or engraved ornament. The cast foliate finial, rocaille and acanthus-ornamented S-scroll spout, and shell-and-scroll-form handle sockets are consistent with Myers's usual production of rococo-style coffeepots, including double-bellied examples probably made in the 1770s and 1780s. These cast elements were perhaps left unchased and are somewhat lacking in definition. The carved wooden handle comprises a pattern of S-and C-scrolls, a design which is probably one described as "kinked" in 1756 in the account book of Joshua Delaplaine, a New York cabinetmaker, who supplied turned and carved wooden handles to Myer Myers and other silversmiths in that city.[85]

Coffee, along with tea and chocolate, were staples of the American diet by the mid-eighteenth century. For at least the first decades of the century, tea was a precious beverage and it continued to be served from relatively small, usually round pots. Coffee and chocolate, by contrast, were served in large vessels of cylindrical, baluster, or double-bellied shape. In Boston, site of the "Tea Party," and elsewhere in the colonies, tensions aroused by the taxation of tea led to a widespread boycott in the late 1760s and 1770s. The daybooks of the Boston goldsmith Paul Revere show in response a spate of ten orders for coffeepots in the six-year period from 1769 to 1775. In the same six years, Revere's customers ordered only two teapots, interrupting a normally steady rate of one or two orders per year.[86]

This coffeepot descended in the Livingston family, although the original owner is not known. A prominent family in eighteenth-century New York, several members, including Robert (1746-1813) and Mary (Stevens) Livingston, were important patrons of plain and rococo-style silver from Myer Myers's shop. A tankard with an engraved cartouche, four candlesticks, and a rare wick trimmer or "snuffer" and stand were made for several members of the Livingston family in the 1770s and 1780s.[87]

85 Johnson, "Cabinetmaking in New York," 55-56.

86 Bowman and Heckscher, *American Rococo*, 95-6.

87 Among the Myers silver made for Robert Livingston are: a c.1770 tankard in the collection of the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, illustrated in Bowman and Heckscher, *American Rococo*, cat. 66; another c.1770 tankard in the collection of the Museum of the City of New York and a c.1770 cann are illustrated in Jeanette Rosenbaum, *Myer Myers, Goldsmith 1723-1795*, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1954), pl. 27, 9B; two from the set of four candlesticks given to Catherine Livingston by her parents are in the Yale University Art Gallery; the snuffers and stand probably made for John and Catherine Livingston Reade are also at Yale; both are illustrated in Katherine C. Buhler and Graham Hood, *American Silver: Garvan and Other Collections in the Yale University Art Gallery*, 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), II: nos. 656, 658.



42
COFFEEPOT, 1775-85

William Hollingshead,
working 1757-1785
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Silver, wood
12 1/2 x 10 x 5 (diameter) inches; 34 oz 9 dwt gross (1068g)

Marks/inscriptions: *Three times on underside, "WH" in cursive in conforming reserve.*
Scratch weight: "33"12;" and "1775"

WILLIAM HOLLINGSHEAD WAS ACTIVE AS an independent craftsman with a shop at the corner of Arch and Second Streets when he placed an advertisement in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1762. Subsequent advertisements in 1774 and the Philadelphia directory of 1785 record him at the same shop address. Hollingshead made high quality silver in the rococo and neoclassical styles. A tea set made by Hollingshead in the early 1780s combines a rococo-style double-bellied creampot and sugar bowl and a drum-shaped teapot with beaded borders and pierced gallery. Before unified sets of urn-shaped tea and coffee wares became popular in the 1790s, perhaps makers and their patrons alike were reluctant to relinquish this elegant double-bellied form perfected in the 1760s.[88]

The generous pear-shaped pot provides a broad surface for a superbly engraved rococo cartouche composed of C-scrolls, shells and rocaille ornament, foliage, and floral swags. Within the engraved rococo cartouche is an interlocking foliate cypher "LP" for the unknown original owner. The cast gadrooned borders on the rim of the lid and foot ring are a distinctive design similar to reeding, which probably signals a stylistic change toward neoclassicism, a trend which began in Philadelphia silver as early as the mid-1770s. The coffeepot has a scratch weight of 33 ounces 12 pennyweights on the underside of the pot, reflecting the weight of silver used in making it. A second inscription on the underside is the date "1775" scratched on the foot ring. Although possibly added later, it likely approximates the date of manufacture in the last decade of Hollingshead's long career.

88 Quimby, *American Silver at Winterthur*, 370.



43
Child's Porringer, 1730-40

Samuel Edwards, 1705-1762
Boston, Massachusetts
Silver
1 1/4 x 5 3/4 x 3 3/4 (diameter) inches; 2 oz 13 dwt (82g)

Marks/inscriptions: *Struck on underside handle, inside center of bowl, "SE" crowned, over a trefoil in shield shaped reserve. Engraved "LD" in roman letters on handle.*



According to family tradition the engraved initials "LD" on the handle signify Lucy Dudley, cited erroneously as the "daughter of Governor [Joseph] Dudley." In fact, Lucy Dudley was the daughter of the Governor's son William Dudley (1686-1747) and his wife Elizabeth Davenport (1704-1749), who married in 1721. Since the porringer has only one set of initials, Lucy Dudley (1727-1768) probably received the porringer as a young child in the 1730s. As was common, the porringer may have been a gift from an elder relative, possibly her aunt, named Lucy Wainwright Dudley; family tradition holds that the niece lived with her aunt Lucy and uncle Paul Dudley. Before her death in 1756 the elder Lucy Wainwright Dudley gave a teapot (also made by Samuel Edwards) to Lucy's sister, Elizabeth Richards (1724-1805). In her will, she also bequeathed a silver salver, chalice, and tankard, to a niece and two nephews.[89]

Samuel Edwards was the fourth son of John Edwards, a Boston goldsmith, who trained both Samuel and his elder brother Thomas (1702-1755). Samuel operated a large and successful business, as indicated by his extensive stock of silver wares, goldsmith's tools, and other supplies, which were valued at more than £775 at the time of his death. Edwards owned various tools for making porringers such as a "porringer anvil" and "small bole stakes" as well tools for casting the handles, including "3 pair brass flasks," "moulding sand," and a variety of patterns. Nevertheless, this porringer was probably not made in Edward's shop as it bears another goldsmith's mark on the handle, which Samuel counterstruck with his own when he marked the bowl. Such evidence demonstrates the complexity of the goldsmithing trade in Boston, where production of hollowware was frequently jobbed out and specialized tasks such as casting, turning, and gilding were assumed by the larger goldsmithing shops. Production of this kind offers further explanation for the remarkable uniformity of porringer designs in Boston and elsewhere in the eighteenth century.[90]

89 The porringer and its provenance are recorded in *American Church Silver of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1911), 50. The teapot, in the collection of The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, is cat. 57 in Quimby, *American Silver at Winterthur,* 99. Lucy Wainwright Dudley and her husband Paul Dudley had at least five children who died young; among them were three daughters all named Lucy, suggesting the particular significance of a namesake to Lucy Wainwright Dudley.

90 Kane, *Massachusetts Silversmiths,* 1997; Barbara McLean Ward, "Boston Goldsmiths, 1690-1730," in Ian M. G. Quimby, ed., *The Craftsman in Early America,* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1984), 147. Very similar handles are used on porringers marked by Paul Revere I, William Breed, and a child's porringer by Thomas Edwards. Buhler, *American Silver* I:177. The partly obliterated initial mark with serifed roman letters in an oblong reserve could be that used by Samuel's elder brother Thomas Edwards, illustrated as mark b, in Buhler, *American Silver,* I:171.

44
Pair of Sauceboats, 1750-60

John Coburn, 1724-1803
Boston, Massachusetts
Silver
5 x 8 3/8 x 5 7/8 (diameter) inches;
14 oz 12 dwt; 14 oz 16 dwt; (915g total)

Marks/inscriptions: *Twice on underside: "J.COBURN" in oblong reserve. Arms erased. Inscribed, underside: "S*H" in shaded roman letters. Scratch weight "14oz 17pt" on one.*



ALTHOUGH BORN IN YORK, MAINE, JOHN COBURN was linked through kinship, training, business, and patronage to several prominent silversmiths in eighteenth-century Boston. He probably served an apprenticeship with Samuel Edwards (see Cat. 43) and later was one of three appraisers of his master's estate at the time of his death in 1762. Coburn was working as an independent master in Boston by 1750, and his shop produced a wide range of hollowware and flatware for clients ranging from churches in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Maine, to prominent families such as the Hancocks, Welleses, Salisburys, and the Storers, to whom he was also related. The daybooks of Paul Revere show that between 1762 and 1774, Coburn frequently subcontracted engraving or the manufacture of specialized items such as a burner and frame for a tea kettle to Revere's shop. In addition to silversmithing, Coburn purchased and sold real estate, kept rental property, and took in boarders. By 1789, he had evidently put artisanry aside, as the occupation which appeared in the Boston directory indicates that he accepted "gentleman boarders." Coburn's silversmithing and other occupations were successful and at the time of his death in 1803, his real and personal estate were valued at more than $12,000.[91]

Sauceboats or "butter boats," as they were usually called in eighteenth-century bills, were often ordered in pairs, according to the fashion for symmetrical table settings. These generously proportioned boats with deeply curved spouts are particularly well designed and neatly executed. The edge of the bowl is formed of repeated ogee or S- and C-scrolls. The cast elements include shell form feet and cabriole legs and a handle composed of S- and C-scrolls, with a ruffled scroll edging enriched with punched pellets. Sauceboats of this form with a combination of baroque- and rococo-style features were first made by Boston silversmiths in the mid-1740s. The first asymmetrical rococo-style cartouches, such as those engraved on the pourer's left sides, appeared in Boston silver during the 1740s. The arms on one boat are only partially erased and appear to be those used by Ebenezer Storer (1699-1761), a wealthy Boston merchant and patron of Coburn and other Boston silversmiths. Ebenezer Storer was also the silversmith's uncle.[92] On the underside of the sauceboats are the engraved initials "S*H;" a triangular pattern of slight depressions on one sauceboat suggest that an earlier three-letter monogram has been removed, probably when the arms and crest were erased. The identity of the subsequent owner "SH" is unknown, although by tradition the pair descended in the Woodbury family of Beverly, Massachusetts.

91 Kane, *Massachusetts Silversmiths,* 294-5.

92 The Storer arms, three quatrefoils on chevron engrailed gules between three mullets, and crest, a talbot's head, alternately assigned to the Andrews or Scarming families, were adopted by Ebenezer Storer I. Buhler, *American Silver,* I:172. The deeply incised star shapes within the mullets and the vertical hatching representing the coloring of the chevron remain partially visible in the erased arms. The design and execution of the cartouche are strongly similar to that used for the Gardner family arms on a teapot also by John Coburn in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. See Buhler, *American Silver*, I:262. Kane, *Massachusetts Silversmiths*, 293-4, 306-7.

45
Caster, 1710-20

Bartholomew Schaats, 1670-1758
New York, New York
Silver
7 x 2 3/4 (diameter) inches;
8 oz 3 dwt (253 g)

Marks/inscriptions: *Underside base, "BS" in oval above trefoil. Engraved griffin crest and below gothic script "R.G.R."*



In New York, perhaps the most heterogeneous of eighteenth-century American cities, silver made before 1720 usually reflects the shared ethnic heritage of its patron and maker. Although the importance of ethnicity as a form-determining factor diminished after this date, patrons of the "middling sort," and especially those of Dutch ancestry living outside New York City, continued to favor silversmiths conversant in the old ways.[93] Little is known about Bartholomew Schaats or his training before he was made a freeman of the city in 1708. He was related by marriage to members of the Kierstede and Kip families, who produced at least two important silversmiths working in New York in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Schaats was likely the master of a small independent shop. Artisans of this scale often had retail or mercantile businesses in addition to goldsmithing and usually did not train apprentices, although Schaats may have trained his half brother Samuel Broadhurst. A relatively small number of works by this maker are known, although they are of consistently high quality along with the best work of his New York contemporaries.[94]

The bold convex and concave gadrooning on the body punctuated with foliate punches and the use of meander wire molding on the waist link this caster to baroque-style silver made by Schaats and other New York silversmiths. Casters in this swelled baluster form are relatively uncommon although two sets of casters with similarly shaped bodies and pierced tops were made in the 1730s by Adrian Bancker (1703-1772) and the Huguenot silversmith Simeon Soumaine (c.1675-1750). A single caster and a smaller pair made c.1710 by the Boston silversmith John Coney (1656-1722) are also known.[95] Such formal similarities across cultural, ethnic, or geographic boundaries serve as a reminder that the baroque style was international in its scope and influence. The Anglo-baroque tradition in which John Coney worked in Boston reflected the same continental European influences as the Dutch and Huguenot traditions of Bancker, Schaats, and Soumaine.[96]



Detail of caster top

Typically made in sets of two or three, casters were used to "cast" or dredge sugar, mustard, pepper, or other spices onto food. In sets of three, one larger pot such as this bold seven-inch form, is usually combined with a smaller pair, although in Dutch silver a larger pair may also be used with one smaller.[97] This caster traditionally was made for Johannes de Peyster (1694-1789), mayor of Albany between 1729 and 1742. It descended to Elizabeth de Peyster who married Hendrik Remsen in 1818. The caster bears a probably nineteenth-century griffin crest and monogram "R.G.R." in Gothic script for a Remsen descendant.

93 Kristan H. McKinsey, "New York Silversmiths and Their Patrons, 1687-1750," (unpublished master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1984), 2-5, 31.

94 Ibid, 84-5, n.10. Silver marked by Bartholomew Schaats includes: a tankard at Historic Deerfield, Inc., illustrated in *The Great River,* cat. 165; a tankard, porringer, and snuffbox at Yale University Art Gallery in Buhler and Hood, *American Silver,* 574-6; a tankard, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; a mug, sword hilt, salver, and two tankards in the collection of the Museum of the City of New York; and a teapot in the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Bayou Bend Collection, in Warren, *Bayou Bend,* cat. 307.

95 Similar casters, marked by John Coney, are at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; see Buhler, *American Silver,* I:55, 56. The Bancker casters are illustrated in Frances Gruber Safford, "American Silver in the American Wing," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art,* (1983), 36; the Soumaine caster is illustrated in Christie's, New York, 31 May 1986, lot 57.

96 Gerald W. R. Ward, "The Dutch and English Traditions in American Silver: Cornelius Kierstede," in Francis J. Puig and Michael Conforti, eds., *The American Craftsman and the European Tradition, 1620-1820,* (Minneapolis: The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 1989), 138-41.

97 M. H. Gans and Th. M. Duyvené de Wit Klinkhammer, Olivier van Oss, trans. *Dutch Silver,* (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), fig. 58.

46
Pair of Casters, 1760-75

Daniel Henchman, 1730-1775
Boston, Massachusetts
Silver
5 1/4 x 2 (diameter) inches (each); 7 oz 1 dwt (219g) (total)

Marks/inscriptions: *On underside, "DH" with a pellet in oblong reserve. Inscribed on underside in roman letters, "I.S / to / SS"*



DANIEL HENCHMAN WAS BORN IN LYNN, MASSACHUSETTS, and apprenticed to the Boston goldsmith Jacob Hurd (Cat. 37). He later married Hurd's daughter Elizabeth in 1753. Like his master, Henchman suffered in business and an advertisement he placed in 1773 laments the competition of "strangers" who import and sell English silver "to the Great Hurt and Prejudice of Townsmen who have been bred to the Business." Henchman made a variety of hollowware and flatware forms including canns, tankards, coffeepots and teapots, sauceboats, casters, and spoons. He is also known to have received at least one important commission for presentation silver from the governor of New Hampshire, a silver monteith given in 1771 to the president of Dartmouth College, which was engraved by his brother-in-law, Nathaniel Hurd.[98]

In England, goldsmiths made a variety of plain and ornamental casters with round or faceted bodies, with or without cast and applied or chased ornament. In America, casters of round form predominate although hexagonal or octagonal casters and occasionally double-bellied casters in the rococo style were also made. The most common type from the mid-eighteenth century is the two-part baluster or urn, which first appeared about 1740. The pattern of perforations in the top can differ widely, but panels of drilled or punched holes with chased diapering and a rosette chased below the finial is also typical of Boston-made casters and in particular a nearly identical caster by Henchman. These casters are inscribed "I.S to SS," although the identities of the donor and recipient are unknown.

98 Kane, *Massachusetts Silversmiths,* 538-44; Buhler, *American Silver,* I:357-8.

47
Sugar Tongs, 1760-80

Zachariah Brigden, 1734-1787
Boston, Massachusetts
Silver
4 5/8 x 1 5/8 inches; 18 dwt (29g)

Marks/inscriptions: *on volute near ring handle, "ZB" with a four-point star in oblong reserve. Inscribed inside ring "N L M"*

Zachariah Brigden apprenticed with Thomas Edwards and was likely free as a journeyman when his master died in 1755. The following year he married Edwards's daughter Sarah, who was the principal beneficiary of her father's estate, an inheritance which may have enabled Brigden to establish his own shop. Advertisements, bills, and other documentary evidence demonstrate the extent of Brigden's goldsmithing business: he made silver objects like tankards, teapots, and spoons, sold tools and supplies for silversmiths and jewelers, and made and retailed imported smallwork, items such as shoe and knee buckles, buttons, seals, brooches, and sugar or tea tongs, like this example. Small items and repair comprised the 'bread and butter' work of many craftsmen, although Brigden is also known to have received several important commissions for presentation silver. Tongs, also called sugar scissors, were used to grasp small lumps of sugar, cut from a larger cone or sugar loaf. Brigden also made spring-type tongs, and a sketch for a sugar tong spring mechanism has survived in his business papers. The monogram for the original owners engraved inside the handle ring of one scissor is unidentified.[99]

99 Hilary Anderson "Making a Living in Eighteenth-Century Boston: the Silversmith Zachariah Brigden," (unpublished master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1996), 1-50.



48
Waiter, 1750-60

John Brevoort, 1715-1775
New York, New York
Silver
1 1/8 x 6 3/8 (diameter) inches;
12 oz 8 dwt (385g)

Marks/inscriptions: *underside center, "IBV" in an oval. Underside, inscribed in shaded roman letters "E*V*R" Underside inscribed in cursive:"Abram ten Broeck/Married/Elizabeth Van Rensselaer/Nov. 1st 1753." Front center inscribed in cursive: "Harriet C. Ten Broeck/1850"*

Little is known of John Brevoort before he was made a freeman in the city of New York in 1742. An announcement of the theft of silver made in his shop provides a contemporary account of his wares. In *The New-York Gazette* in October 1760 he advertised a reward to be paid by the owner Nicholas Burger for the recovery of a teapot, creampot, sugar tongs, six teaspoons, and six tablespoons, marked on the underside "with his Stamp, thus, I B V, in a Circle." Brevoort's use of a stamp with three initials is in keeping with that of many ethnically Dutch silversmiths working in New York in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Brevoort produced traditional style silver through the 1750s, although about 1764 he received a commission for his best-known works: three tankards with fully developed rococo-style engraving presented to members of the Collegiate Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, of which Brevoort had been a member since 1739.[100]

This waiter is identical in form and detail to a slightly larger salver marked by Brevoort's contemporary George Ridout, a London-trained silversmith who was recorded as a freeman in New York in 1745. Although small in size, the waiter is made entirely of cast parts and is a surprisingly heavy and solid form. The terms waiter and salver were often used interchangeably for serving trays which differed only in size. In 1760 the Philadelphia silversmith Joseph Richardson ordered from London several chased stands or "weighters" for coffeepots, suggesting another purpose which may account for this waiter's sturdy construction. The highly polished planar surfaces of both waiters and salvers also provide an area for inscriptions and elaborate coats of arms and other emblems, suggesting another important role as a means of displaying wealth and lineage on the sideboard or cupboard shelf. The underside of the waiter is engraved with the initials "EVR" for Elizabeth van Rensselaer (1734-1813), daughter of Stephen van Rensselaer. The waiter was likely made before 1763, when Elizabeth married General Abraham Ten Broeck (1734-1810). Beneath the monogram is a nineteenth-century inscription (which erroneously records the date of her marriage as 1753), perhaps contemporary with the inscription on the front which indicates that Elizabeth's great-granddaughter Harriet Cutter Ten Broeck owned the waiter in 1850.[101]

100 Gottesman, *Arts and Crafts in New York*, 32. Two of the tankards are known to exist; one in the collection of Historic Deerfield is illustrated in Martha Gandy Fales and Henry N. Flynt, *The Heritage Foundation Collection of Silver,* (Old Deerfield, Mass.: The Heritage Foundation, 1968), 64-5. Although the forms chosen are conventional New York rococo-style tankards (see cat. 38), the patronage of the College Church was usually reserved for silversmiths of Dutch ancestry including Brevoort and previously Henricus and Jacobus Boelen and Adrian Bancker.

101 Heckscher and Bowman, *American Rococo*, 99; Sotheby's New York, January 16-17, 1988, *The Stanley Paul Sax Collection,* lot 89.



49
Salver, c. 1760

Bartholomew LeRoux II, 1717-1763
New York, New York
Silver

1 1/2 x 10 3/4 (diameter) inches;
23 oz 10 dwt (731g)

Marks/inscriptions: *on two feet, "BLR" conjoined in oval. Scratched lightly in cursive on reverse, "JBG"*

Bartholomew LeRoux was a third generation New York silversmith, following his Huguenot grandfather Bartholomew I (1663-1713), for whom he was named, and both his uncle John and his father Charles Le Roux (1689-1745), with whom he apprenticed. He was made a freeman of the city in 1739. By the 1720s, ethnic boundaries between the city's Dutch, Huguenot, and English citizens probably diminished, but were replaced with distinctions drawn along class and political lines. Consequently, Bartholomew LeRoux's clientele were likely more diversified than his grandfather's patrons in ethnicity and religious affiliation. Bartholomew II made the usual variety of hollowware as well as several rare forms, including a two-handled covered cup which descended in the Verplanck family, and a pierced rococo-style basket probably made for Peter and Mary (Alexander) Livingston.[102]

This salver conforms closely to the work of New York's best silversmiths; an even larger salver marked by Thomas Hammersley uses an identical border of large and smaller lobed shells atop C-and S-scrolls, set on a deep, cavetto-molded rim. The salver's three cast feet are a form unique to New York silver, consisting of two facing open C-scroll forms on a three-lobed foot with addorsed chased foliate, or winged, forms above. This salver also bears a richly engraved but compact rococo cartouche of C-scrolls, foliage, flowers, and rocaille ornament, all surrounding the interlaced cypher "AMM," for the first owners, Major General Alexander McDougal and his wife Margaret Shaw, who were married in November 1760.[103]

102 McKinsey, "New York Silversmiths," 2-5, 31. The cup is illustrated in Quimby, *American Silver at Winterthur,* 262-3. The basket was sold at Sotheby's New York, January 19-21, 1996, lot 583.

103 Buhler, *American Silver*, II:557. Sotheby's, *Sax Collection*, lot 88.



50
Salver, c.1768

Myer Myers, 1723-1795
New York, New York
Silver
12 (diameter) inches; 28 oz 6 dwt (881g)

Marks/inscriptions: *Center, below inscription, "MM" conjoined, in square reserve.*



ACCORDING TO THE UPPERMOST LATIN MOTTO, "amicitiae pignus pro beneficus receptis," this salver was "a pledge of friendship for kindness received." Below, the inscription "gratior amico veniens immobile virtus" demonstrates that "beloved virtue comes from an eternal friend." The recipient was New York merchant Theodorus Van Wyck (1718-1778) who was recognized for his help in raising his sister Magretta's young children after the death of their father Brandt Schuyler (1717-1752). The engraved allegorical scene which depicts Van Wyck's generosity is an interpretation of Psalm 34, verse 15: "The eyes of the Lord are on the Righteous and his ears are open unto their cry." In this rendering, an angel crowns a female figure representing Justice or Righteousness, while another showers gold upon her from a cornucopia. The donors of the salver were all related to Van Wyck: Samuel Schuyler (1747-1790) was his nephew; William Lupton (c.1738-1797) married his niece Johanna Schuyler in September 1761, and Cornelius Swits married his niece Catherine Schuyler (b.1738) in January 1762. Van Wyck evidently regarded this salver more highly than any other of his plate and through it remembered his friendship with the donors. In his will, proved in February 1778, he bequeathed to his son Abraham, "my large silver salver or waiter which was presented to me by my friends Samuel Schuyler, William Lupon [sic], and Cornelius Switts [sic]."[104]

The maker Myer Myers was master of a prolific goldsmithing shop which for more than four decades counted colonial New York's mercantile, political, and military elites among its many clients. Myers responded to the demands of a prosperous and pretentious clientele with innovative designs, evidence of a successful business with access to highly skilled workers and the latest London fashions. Rococo silver produced in this shop ranks among the fullest expressions of the style in America, as epitomized by the Van Wyck salver. This allegorical scene is unique in American silver and is widely considered the most ambitious rococo-style engraving of the period. Its execution may be credited to a specialist worker in Myers's shop such as the fugitive indentured "English Servant Man, named Lewis Meares...a jeweller by trade [who] can engrave," whose escape Myers advertised in 1761.[105] Myers's shop produced the usual variety of hollowware and flatware forms such as tankards, coffee and tea wares, porringers, salvers and waiters, and spoons and ladles. In addition this shop also produced wares not commonly made by other American goldsmiths, often using laborious ornamental techniques such as piercing and repoussé chasing. Pierced forms rarely produced by other silversmiths include a basket, wine coasters, and a dish ring. Myers also produced elaborate cast and chased candle snuffers and stand, candlesticks, a gold buckle, a snuffbox, and at least five pairs of rimonim, or Torah finials, made for synagogues in New York, Newport, and Philadelphia.

104 Heckscher and Bowman, *American Rococo*, 110. New York Probate Court, Wills Liber, Vol. 37:136.

105 Hechscher and Bowman, *American Rococo*, 76. Rosenbaum, *Myer Myers*, 49-52. Records of the Congregation Shearith show payment to Myers in 1787 for engraving brass candlesticks and in 1789 for engraving a fountain, so it is possible that Myers was skilled as an engraver himself.

51
Set of four Candlesticks, 1765-85

Samuel Tingley, working c.1765-1796
New York, New York
Silver
10 x 4 3/4 x 4 3/4 inches each;
total 92 oz 5 dwt (2869g)

Marks/inscriptions: *Each marked inside stepped base, cursive "N.York" and cursive "ST" in conforming reserves.*

In 1767 Samuel Tingley advertised in *The New-York Mercury* as a"Gold and Silver-Smith" at a new shop address, and he is believed to have worked in New York until after the Revolutionary War. He was listed in the 1796 Philadelphia city directory, where he may have continued in business.[106] Despite Tingley's long career, relatively little silver bearing his mark survives, which may indicate the greater importance of retailing and other mercantile activity to this craftsman. Nevertheless, Tingley's silver is characterized by excellence of design and workmanship. Tingley is one of the few American silversmiths known to have made rococo-style candlesticks in two different patterns—this form and a hexagonal shell base design which was also produced by silversmiths in New York and Philadelphia.

Very few American-made candlesticks are known today and probably few were made. Sets of four rococo-style candlesticks are extremely rare. The combination of a tapered columnar molded shaft, a raised swirled gadrooned stem, and a stepped base enriched with gadrooned ornament is virtually identical to examples from the early 1760s marked by London candlestick makers Ebenezer Coker and William Cafe. Tingley likely formed the molds for casting these candlesticks using just such an imported original, as did his contemporary Myer Myers. A pair of candlesticks marked by Myers reproduces impressions of London hallmarks in the English candlestick used to form the sand molds.[107] Nonetheless, Tingley used a slightly different method to fabricate the cast parts. In customary English practice, these joints would have been secured with solder. Instead, each candle socket was cast in halves, as were the shafts; the bases were cast in one piece. The halves were soldered and the shaft and base components assembled with silver rivets and square nuts, which are peened for strength. After the sticks were assembled, Tingley chased the gadrooned borders on the candle sockets, shaft, and bases to sharpen these ornamental details. As early as 1761, the silversmith John Pinto offered "chass'd candlesticks" and other rococo-style chased silver for sale in *The New-York Mercury.* No history of ownership accompanies this set, although the original owner must have been a style-conscious individual of substantial means. The four candlesticks weigh in total more than 92 ounces and must have cost more than £30, a sizeable investment for any table.[108]

106 Louisa Bartlett, "American Silver," *The Saint Louis Art Museum Bulletin,* n.s. 17, no. 1 (1984), 19.

107 Rosenbaum, *Myer Myers,* 103.Two pairs of Myer Myers rococo-style candlesticks from a set of four given to Catherine Livingston by her parents, Peter and Sarah Van Brugh, are in the collections of the Yale University Art Gallery and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. A set of four sticks marked by the Boston silversmith Thomas Dane are in the collection of Historic Deerfield.

108 At 6 shillings 8 pence per ounce, the metal alone probably cost about £30; the total cost of the sticks would also include the silversmith's labor. Gottesman, *Arts and Crafts in New York,* 57.



52
Flower Family Coat of Arms, 1765

Elizabeth Flower, 1742-1781
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Silk, gold, and silver threads on silk moiré ground, mahogany and pine frame with glass and gilding
11 1/2 x 12 3/4 x 2 inches

Marks/inscriptions:
Cursive ink inscription on reverse, "Elizabeth Flower 1765"
In chalk cursive, "EMS"

THIS BEAUTIFULLY WORKED COAT OF ARMS is one of an extraordinary group of embroidered textiles, including pictures, a sampler, and a book cover, along with a manuscript book of needlework designs made by the sisters Ann, Elizabeth, and Mary Flower. Although the survival of so many works from a single family is rare, objects of this kind were valued expressions of skill which were given or preserved as heirlooms.[109] Today these objects document the creative lives of eighteenth-century women for whom the making of fancy embroidery was a prominent part. The diaries kept by Elizabeth Sandwith Drinker (1735-1807), a young Quaker acquaintance of "Betsy" Flower, contain a list of worked objects including a "Screen in Irish stitch Flowers," a "large Woosted Bible Cover," five pocket books, more than two dozen pincushions, and dozens of other small items such as "watch strings" and covers for needle-books and a tweezer case, made between 1757 and 1761, when she married Henry Drinker.[110] Doubtless before and possibly after her 1777 marriage to Christopher Marshall (1740-1806), Elizabeth Flower executed a similar variety of embroidered items of which, happily, this well-preserved coat of arms is extant.

From about 1730 to the 1780s, samplers ornamented with floral sprigs and needlework pictures of flower-filled vases and flowering trees executed in silk and metallic threads on silk moiré grounds comprise a Philadelphia pictorial embroidery style. Elizabeth Flower's coat of arms, and an identical example worked by Ann Flower, colorfully renders a C-scroll and rocaille-ornamented cartouche surrounded with scrolling foliage and flowers. Below the Flower arms, Elizabeth also embroidered an interlaced mirror-image cypher of her initials. Although symmetrical in composition, the ornamental vocabulary is consistent with the current rococo style. The design and execution of these motifs are reminiscent of the watercolor and ink drawings by Ann and Mary Flower, and their debt to the Philadelphia pictorial needlework style is clear. Although several eighteenth-century schoolmistresses have been identified, neither the Flower sisters' instructor nor the school they may have attended is known. Several closely related Philadelphia embroideries are credited to the instruction or influence of Elizabeth Marsh (1683-1741), or her daughter Ann Marsh (1717-1797), who after her mother's death continued to teach the daughters of Philadelphia's elites until 1791.[111]

109 The cursive initials "EMS" inscribed in chalk on the backboard of the frame are for Elizabeth Flower Marshall's daughter, Elizabeth Marshall, who married Christopher Slocum in 1806. Betty Ring, *Girlhood Embroidery: American Samplers and Pictorial Needlework, 1650-1850,* 2 vols. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), II: 358.

110 Elaine Forman Crane, ed., 3 vols., *The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker,* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1991), I:1-3, 33. Elizabeth Sandwith Drinker once took tea with Betsy Flower and was a friend of Betsy's aunt and uncle, Charles and Hannah Jones.

111 Ring, *Girlhood Embroidery,* II:321-59.



Reader's Note

Dimensions cited are the greatest height, width, and depth to the nearest sixteenth of an inch; diameters are noted when applicable. Silver weights are measured in troy ounces and grams. Primary woods are cited first. With the exception of Cat. 35, woods are identified by visual analysis only.

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(front cover)
CHAIR (detail), 1775
Eliphalet Chapin, 1741-1807
American, East Windsor, Connecticut
Black cherry, pine
38 1/2 x 23 3/4 x 32 inches
Private collection

(back cover)
SALVER, c.1768
Myer Myers, 1723-1795
American, New York, New York
Silver
Diameter 12 inches
Private collection

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